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NESE HEART THROBS

JENNIE V. HUGHES

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CHINESE HEART-THROBS

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Shih Mei Yü (Mary Stone, M. D.) and Jennie V. Hughes.

Chinese Heart-Throbs

By

JENNIE V. HUGHES

With Introduction By

MARY STONE, M.D.

(SHIH MEI YÜ)

NEW YORK CHICAGO

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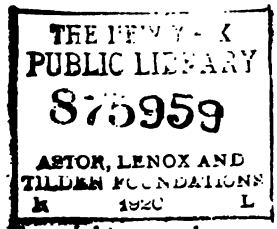
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LOVINGLY DEDICATED

TO MY SAINTED

FATHER AND MOTHER

TO WHOSE LIVES OF DEVOTION

TO

JESUS CHRIST

I OWE THE INSPIRATION OF MY

LIFE-WORK

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INTRODUCTION

WHEN my precious sister, Anna Stone, the sweet singer of "Saved by Grace" and our evangelist in Kiukiang, passed through the portals of Heaven as she said, "Hark, sister, do you hear the Heavenly Orchestra? I am going! I see the Light!" how my heart throbbed as I stood on the threshold of another epoch of my life. Never before was Heaven so near and so real, nor earth so dull and bereft, yet full of the great evangelistic opportunities opened up to my sister, who had been trained in the United States by Bishop and Mrs. I. W. Joyce for the great evangelistic field of China.

My sister's last charge to me and the school of but fifteen women was to pray earnestly to the Lord to look over the whole world for some one after His own heart to take charge of this school, to train through it evangelistic workers and teachers for the great needy field that is white unto harvest.

So when my heart was aching over the great personal loss of not only my sister but of a trained worker for the Lord's service, the Nan Chang riot drove Miss Jennie V. Hughes, then a new missionary, to Kiukiang, just a week before Anna

took her departure. Miss Hughes was used of the Lord to comfort the bereaved sister and it was during that week of intense loneliness and heartache that Miss Hughes was led of the Lord to touch my life and to enter into the life of this little nucleus of a school for women in Kiukiang.

How the Lord called Miss Hughes into this school fourteen years ago in answer to prayer, how the Lord opened the way for building the present school known as the Knowles Training School, how the Lord has been the Head of that school, using Miss Hughes as His channel for blessing to enlighten the souls of the women of China, how the Lord has sought out rough jewels and polished them in Knowles, these facts are well known both in the United States and China.

Education of adult women up to that time was considered almost a hopeless task. Some missionaries said, "It is impossible 'to teach old dogs new tricks,'" and "It is too difficult to teach women whose habits are formed, new ways."

But "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that He cannot save; neither His ear heavy that it cannot hear!" These life stories are records of what the power of God can do in a country where customs and laws are the best that can be expected in a heathen nation. Only the life-giving power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ can transform such lives amid such surroundings. Like the white

Easter lily growing out of the black dirt of marshy soil, sending forth its pure white petals and radiant beauty and fragrance, so these women taken from the dark heathen surroundings when given the Gospel message of love have blossomed out into a service of love and holiness unto the Lord.

The Lord wonderfully heard the prayer for giving them such a leader as Miss Hughes. Her association with Maud Ballington Booth in the prison work where the most hopeless, lost souls have been reclaimed for the Lord, the Captain of our salvation, had made her pre-eminently a worker of faith in the human soul. Her close contact with the Chinese, living in heartfelt sympathy with them, has made her a refuge where these weary souls have poured their hearts out, knowing that they would find in her a friend in need. Her journalistic ability serving on the staff of her father as editor of *The Guide to Holiness,* her position in the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society as Field Secretary, presenting the world's needs, all prepared her for her great life-work in training evangelistic workers for China.

Personally, as one of her closest friends in all this period of fourteen years, I can testify to her noble Christian character, her quick wit and humour, her intuition of right or wrong, her Bible knowledge and innate power to impart to others what she herself has learned, her love mingled with strict discipline, her indefatigable initiating energy

and her trust in God, which mark her as one of the most prominent missionaries of the time.

It was from Knowles, when I heard the hum of prayer at night as the many older students led the newcomers that I thought of the verse, "And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the top of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host."

These heart stories will prove to be such a foretaste of the Kingdom blessing and will help many a weary traveller on the way homeward!

"Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with recompense. He will come and save you."

Her co-worker and comrade,

MARY STONE, M.D.

Shih Mei Yü.

I

HOW SHE PRAYED THE CHRISTIANS BACK

"SIAO CHIE, are you too tired to try another trip—just a short one this time?" and Mrs. Mei's pleading voice was not to be disregarded. We had recently returned from a long and very wearisome itinerary on the north side of the Yangtse River. The weather had been unfavourable, rains had followed us every day, the wheel-barrows had stuck in the mud frequently and all the halo of the missionary's life had disappeared into fine air—impossible, in one's wildest desire to be enthusiastic, to distinguish. It had been so good to get back to the mission home, with a dry bed every night, and dry clothes every day and something besides rice and fried dry fish to eat. Another trip so soon? Mrs. Mei saw the hesitating attitude of the missionary and commenced again:

"You see this place I want you to go to, was destroyed during the Boxer uprising—that is seven years ago. We once had a fine church there, with a goodly number of Christians. And we had schools too, but everything was scattered in 1900. The pastor and his family just escaped with their

lives, the Christians all fled to distant parts, the church and all of our mission property was torn down—that was before you came to China, but Siao Chie"—and Mrs. Mei again pleaded with all the eloquence of her great dark eyes and intense feeling in her voice. "Somebody must go back there and start the work again. There is no missionary on the district but yourself—you are not afraid and I will go with you and—let's plan to go right away! I am sure the Lord wants us to go—don't you feel that way? I do!" Well, the missionary didn't feel exactly "that way" but the little Chinese companion talking with her has never yet been known to fail to accomplish anything she started out to do! A talk that evening with the Senior member of the mission, the white-haired "veteran" who for forty years has loved China better than anything in life, brought little encouragement for the project.

"You go to Saho? No, I cannot think this is wise. During the Boxer uprising, there was no place so anti-foreign on our district. The place is in the interior—in among the hills back from here a few miles—the people know little of what is going on in the country—they are very ignorant, are not progressive—I really could not consent for you to go. You are not acquainted with the language sufficiently to make yourself understood, and you are a foreigner. I think it is better to wait a little until some one more experienced can go." But the not-

to-be denied Mrs. Mei was there and at once answered, "I shall go with her. I can understand some English and the missionary knows a little Chinese [a mighty little, by the way!] Please think of the possibility in that place and our duty to the once established church there. We have already waited seven years. Well, if the Siao Chie does not go with me, I shall go alone!" And we knew she would do it.

It is a serious thing for the young missionary to go into any enterprise contrary to the advice of the experienced missionary, but after further talk with the Chinese themselves who seemed to know the situation in the aforenamed town of Saho, it was decided to venture.

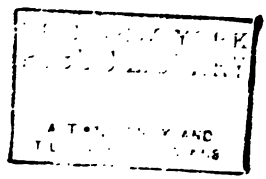
A very early start was made that day in the sedan-chairs. No, they were not the chairs you see in the pictures—the square, box-shaped things with a covering and the curtains daintily hung over the windows. We took the ordinary mountain chair—a rattan arrangement strapped to the long bamboo poles—very light and comfortable for the coolie on his long tramp up and down hill. All day long, through the narrow roads, just footpaths in fact, winding in and out of the rice-field country, passing villages where our bearers always halted to "drink tea" and rest, giving us an opportunity to preach the Word, our journey took us. It was a beautiful day, the sun warming our chilled bodies as we passed over the plains, then dipping into the val-

leys between the hills, in brief intervals. We made few stops, as we were anxious to reach the town before the city gates should be locked for the night; yet, on the other hand, we wanted to enter about nightfall, feeling that we would be less open to inspection at that time, as few people would be on the streets.

About eight o'clock that evening, we reached our destination. Silently the coolies pushed their way through the main street of the town, and hurried along to the place indicated by Mrs. Mei, where the Methodist Mission had once had its prosperous work. On the leading thoroughfare, in the heart of the business section of Saho, our chairs halted. The coolies with a groan slowly lowered their burden from their shoulders, wiped the perspiration from their wet faces with the blue sleeve of their coarse gown, and waited. Mrs. Mei and I saw before us a locked Chinese gate. Before us rose a high wall somewhat the worse for wear, the top layer of bricks knocked off in places. How were we to gain entrance? A crowd was gathering rapidly —the street was blocked—true it did not take much to "block" it, for it was only about fifteen feet from the door on one side to that on the opposite!

Mrs. Mei found a way by sending several of the coolies that had been our companions all day to the back of the premises to see if they could scale the wall there and gain an entrance for us. In a

On the way to Sa-ho



few minutes the front gate on its rusty hinges gave way, and a shout went up from the now thoroughly interested mob on the street, as the smiling and triumphant faces of the coolies appeared through the opening. We attempted to rush it and get ourselves and our possessions inside before the crowd, and thought to close the gate and plan for the "next thing." But there is little hope of ever getting away from the curious crowd in China. We went in and all the town of Saho with us—so it seemed to us. In less time than it can be told, every available space was filled—the old broken-down church building, roofless but with the side walls standing for a few feet up, the remnant of the parsonage, the out-buildings, the modest little garden space overgrown with weeds and something that resembled a miniature forest, all of which named undergrowth covered broken bricks and stones in a most deceptive way.

Our rolls of bedding and other necessary articles were piled in one place and the coolies told to "watch" them. We gave our attention to the crowd;—a set, determined smile was on our faces, and we answered the questions as to why we were there and what we proposed to do, with all the patience we could command after the long weary day's journey. But this, after an hour or so, did not satisfy their curiosity. They continued to remain, not the slightest intimation given of leaving our presence. Supper time came and passed. One

after another of our audience was summoned to eat and ran most unwillingly to do so and hurried back wiping the mouth on the sleeve of the coat and immediately had the next question ready. About nine o'clock we said to Mrs. Mei that we thought we might send them away. She answered with surprise "No, we cannot do that! They are watching to see what we are here for. I guess I will preach!" and forthwith she announced a meeting to be straightway held in the ruins of the old chapel. By this time it was pitch-dark. We had lighted the one lantern we had brought with us, and as we started for the chapel, with a roar and shout of good humour, the crowd went with us. We found the place where the pulpit had been; part of the platform was there, and we climbed up that we might get a breathing place and vantage-ground from which to work.

Never shall we forget that sight! Overhead the stars were shining brightly and the night was so clear that we could almost see the midnight blue of the heavens over us. There was no place to sit down, so the people, mostly men and boys and here and there a few women of the working class, stood shoulder to shoulder wedged into the tiny space by the hundreds, and then when that space was filled they climbed up to the top of the broken side walls and sat there clearly outlined against the sky! As each new attempt to scale the wall was made successfully, a cheer went up from the admiring throng

below. Laughter, shouts of derision, friendly disputes all went on about us in loud voices, and I looked and wondered how a "meeting" was to be held there! But it was! Mrs. Mei pulled her ever-present hymnal out of her bag and, holding the book in one hand and the lantern in the other, she started a familiar hymn. We sang at the top of our voices. As the missionary recognized a character she gave it especial force while the non-recognizable characters—(for remember she was a new missionary then) just received a very humble "la, la." Then Mrs. Mei explained what prayer meant and offered such, but scarcely could a word be heard, for the crowd was not yet through commenting on the duet they had just been favoured with!

We heard all about us, "Who is she talking to?" and, "What has she got her eyes shut for?" and "Let's go. I'm afraid! She is talking to the spirits!" Following the prayer, Mrs. Mei read from the Book of Books. Ah, that Book! How it has been criticized, how torn to pieces, how disbelieved, how profaned, and even in this day how much has been discredited. But there is something about the little Book that—held in the hand of the missionary, of the Christian, be he of any race, in any land, under any circumstances—gives strength to the weary, courage to the timid, comfort to those who need it! And as Mrs. Mei opened it she turned with a smile to the missionary at her side, then started to read. No, nothing new, nothing that we

all do not know: just the story of God's best gift to this world, and to that motley crowd of men and women gathered there under the stars of heaven, ten thousand miles from the land of the Stars and Stripes that we call home. But the message was eagerly listened to, and somehow the dark skins, the darker hair and eyes, the blue gowns of the wearers, the strangeness of it all, was forgotten and we felt a warm glow about our hearts as we listened and it seemed more like an overgrown family party! The shouts ceased, the laughter was ended, the jostling came to an end, all heard and were glad to hear. Late into the night the messenger of the Cross told her story—she was not a college-bred woman. She could not possibly have told the meaning of philosophy or anthropology or of the other ologies that confuse many today, but she had had all that the Mission School with its high school course could give her, and "she knew Him in whom she believed." Oh, how she poured out the story of the waiting blessings for those who will love and trust the true Saviour!

It was long past midnight when after more duets and some interpreted talks from the missionary, the people were persuaded to leave us. Exhausted from the strain of it, weak from a day with little food, longing to get away from folks, we at last barred the last reluctantly retreating figure from the place, and hand in hand started back to find a place to sit down. Our coolies had discovered part

of the mud-brick range still standing and were gathering dry bits of grass and weeds together for a fire. One, earlier in the evening, had slipped out to the street to buy some rice and vegetables and was preparing these for cooking, while we were groaning at the thought of having to wait for the rice to cook, when there was a distinct but gentle knocking at the barred front gate. Mrs. Mei declared her intention of going alone, but we insisted on accompanying her while our coolies brought up the rear, each with a club in hand.

We cautiously approached the gate, and Mrs. Mei boldly called out, "Who is there? What do you want?" A very quiet voice answered, "Shih O!" ("It is I")—not very illuminating, but so harmless that we opened the gate. There stood a very little old woman, bent with age, dressed in the coarsest of blue cotton, a bit of the same blue fastened shawl fashion over her head. Little beads of black eyes, keen but so full of kindliness, looked into ours as with eager hands, trembling and so small and shrunken with hard work, she thrust a Chinese pail through the opening, and then whispered in the most loving tones: "A chicken—some soup I made for you. Don't tell I've been here. I went home and killed the chicken and made the soup for you! It's good and strong and will do you good—fire wouldn't burn, or I'd have had it here sooner; I am a Christian. I used to be a church member, and all these seven years

I've prayed the Father to send you back here to us to teach us the way. Now you have come and I'm so happy. I must go now, but I'll be here to see you tomorrow morning!" And she was gone! And there we were with a kettle of the most delicious soup—enough for all as soon as the rice was ready! Ah, let men criticize! Care? *He does care!* He had heard and answered the prayer of the old saint—the last Christian left in the city of Saho!

Coolies, Chinese evangelist, and missionary all sat in a group about the fire a short time afterwards and ate rice and chicken soup—a meal fit for a king! Then we prepared for the night, having talked, as we ate, to the coolies of how the Heavenly Father never forgets His own!

Broken-backed pulpit seats and chapel benches brought together finally made something on which we could spread our bedding, and we stretched our weary selves on them, while the coolies withdrew some yards away to take turns in sleeping and watching with a small smouldering fire near by. Overhead, the stars were still shining and blinking, and they looked just the same as in the old New Jersey home! Soon the bats came out from the dark corners of the place where for seven long years they had been monarchs of that one-time mission compound. Very low they flew at times, so that the corner of the heavy Chinese "bei wo" was a comfort as a shield.

We were just dropping off to sleep when we heard subdued voices and the scraping sound of sandals coming over the back wall. Now that evening had been about as full as one of the present company cared for! And yet there are folks at home who ask the returned missionary, "Don't you find life very monotonous over there in China?" At once we asked of Mrs. Mei, whose closely wrapped figure was near our own on a similar bed, "Who is it?" The answer came back, "Tsah!" It was a new word, and uttered with such emphasis that we knew it was something frightful! Tsah! Tsah! we said over and over again. What does it mean? Again we whispered, "Tsah! What does it mean? Tell in English please." And leaning towards the now terrified missionary, Mrs. Mei managed to say in English, "Never mind. I will save you!" Then it *was* something to be saved from—wild animals! a mob! robbers! Well, but the coolies headed by Mrs. Mei were after them and a cry, a scuffle, and then laughter from the defending party,—we were all clustered about the one lantern, and Mrs. Mei said, "Just thieves; I could not think of the word in English when you asked." And the meaning of "tsah" has always remained at least with *one* missionary!

Morning came and with it a busy day of interviewing the representatives of the officials that came to talk over the reopening of the mission

work. And we found that many were the people eager to welcome us back with schools for the children and the friendly help of a pastor and Bible woman. With glad hearts we went out of the city, smiles following us and reassurances given of protection and cordial welcome to be afforded the mission workers. And in a few months' time the little church was rebuilt, the girls' school established, and the first girl to be enrolled as a pupil was the granddaughter of that midnight visitor with her gift of chicken soup for God's tired ones! Still, the most conspicuous figure in the beautiful new church, later built by the Christians of Saho, is the little, plainly dressed old woman who never tires of telling how *she* prayed the Christians back to the town!

II

"WOODY HEROINE"

THE day was a hot one—not warm, not summery; more than either of these,—it was *hot!* The little day schoolroom was stifling and the some forty little girls sat with drooping heads at their desks, the most mischievous-loving among the crowd having shown no energy since the early hours. They had been there at their books since seven o'clock in the morning. Of course they had skipped away one by one as the call came through one of the windows from time to time, "Mo-er lai chi fan!" "Girl, come and get your rice!" And without more than a nod of understanding from the teacher sitting yonder at her desk, the child had obeyed the summons. Rules and regulations in a day-school in China must be exceedingly elastic to suit the customs of the Oriental!

But now, nothing of interest was happening. The reed shades had been lowered at the windows to shut off to some extent the glare of the burning sun from its reflection on the adjacent whitewashed wall; the earthen floor tramped by many little feet for many years into a cement-appearing floor, was

sending forth a clammy dampness that conveyed a cave-like odour to the room, and the tiles overhead could be heard to crackle with the intense heat that fell upon them. Yes, it was unquestionably *hot!*

Footsteps were heard down the little alleyway that led from the street to the schoolhouse, located just back of the chapel. The teacher straightened in her chair, the children attempted to show interest for a moment, and then as the foreign missionary entered, true always to Chinese courtesy that nothing can ever change, all rose and smiled as they exclaimed with pride the one word always remembered in English and suitable for all occasions, "Good morning!" That it was late in the afternoon made not the slightest difference—it was their proud salutation and sure to be understood by the new, young missionary.

A few words with the little Chinese woman teacher, and the missionary announced that she had come to "rest the children by giving a lesson in English." Every little figure was instantly on the alert, every slate and pencil and "Three-Character Classic" and Arithmetic was shoved inside desks—life *was* worth living! A long row of eager, black-eyed girls filled the front bench, and the very exertion caused by moving from their accustomed seats to the front row made the flushed faces to exude more moisture even than the damp floor, and in each hand the fan commenced to move rapidly.

A drill of the phonetic sounds commenced and

some simple words were given. Whether the day was too hot or the children too limp or the missionary too overheated—whatever the cause will never be rightly known, but these rosy little lips did not get the sounds. The missionary was working hard—very hard! She knew a little Chinese, even less than she thought she knew or that she was writing home that she knew! But she must do something to help the girls to get the correct pronunciation, so she dived bravely into her scanty vocabulary. In Chinese she said, or she thought she said, "Children, watch my mouth as I say it!" and she pointed to her own above-named member. There was a startled look on the faces of the weary children. What had the foreigner said? Again she repeated the question, and again the startled expression swept over the faces of the children. The words were repeated and again the injunction. Yes, the day was hot and the children's brains were almost truly in the condition that every fond parent had many times declared a girl's brain to be—"stupid," but still there *was* enough action there to take in the thrice-repeated injunction. An exchange of glances from shining black eyes and then, Chinese etiquette was forgotten for one wild moment while each child sought to stifle her laughter in the big sleeve of her gown.

The missionary was indignant—exasperated. Silly children wasting her time! There was absolutely nothing to laugh at. The one sentence she

had used was *perfectly correct*—of that she was positive. With a firm and determined rap on the desk with the pointer, the missionary said firmly, "Don't laugh. Look at me! Look at my mouth and say it as I do!" and once more laying her hand on her mouth she repeated the word in English. It was too much. All the teachings of the great teacher Confucius that the girls knew by heart and had that very day recited so glibly, all the injunctions from parents to be respectful to the teacher whatever he or she might be, were in one wild moment forgotten. They couldn't stand it—she, the missionary had said it again, and the taller girl, the brightest one in the school, the one with the most dainty embroidered satin shoes, and with those wonderful earrings and the jade bracelet—yes, that one, "Woody Heroine," had even turned her back and was stuffing the end of her gown in *her* mouth! The tired missionary gave a sidelong glance at the Chinese teacher, but there was nothing to be read in that dignified figure busily correcting papers with the Chinese pen! A few more hurried words and the lessen ended, and the foreigner slipped away to the mission compound.

Supper was just ending. The Chinese woman doctor and her friend the missionary were in no haste to move—the night was as warm as the day had been and both were glad of the quiet of home for one brief hour. A knock at the dining-room door and the teacher from the day-school smilingly

asked if she might interview the doctor for a moment. Interruptions of this character were not unusual, and the missionary thought nothing of it until a peal of merry laughter from outside came through the door and in a minute the teacher had fled and the "Little Doctor" was telling with great glee the cause of the impossible English lesson that afternoon.

"You said it all right, dear," she laughed. "That is, the words were all right—only a trifling difference. You see it's 'kee' for mouth and 'keo' for dog, with a little harder sound on one than the other and you persisted in calling your mouth your 'dog' and instructed the children to watch it."

This was the missionary's first introduction to Woody Heroine. After that many were the English lessons given her, and quick and delightful was the response from the little girl. Then came the days when brief Bible talks were ventured on and then one beautiful, never-to-be forgotten day when Woody Heroine wanted to talk alone with the missionary. Seated beside her foreign teacher, she told of her love for the Christ and that she so much wanted baptism. But she told also of her great fear of letting it be known at home. Must she tell her father? He was the leader of the Mohammedan worshippers of the city, and his consent could never be secured. Of course, without this the missionary could not sanction the step so

longed for. Together they knelt and asked the Heavenly Father to bless and help as the father was told of his daughter's conversion to the Christian faith. And Woody Heroine prayed also—and how that prayer was to be remembered in the days to follow! Night was coming on as the missionary walked down the narrow alley with the child's hand in her own. Woody Heroine was such an attractive girl! She was now ten years old—her eager face was turned to that of the missionary with tender affection and as they parted at the chapel gate, the child's face was flushed with pleasure and she called out, "Good-bye, teacher. Tomorrow we will meet," and was quickly lost among the throngs of hurrying, jostling pedestrians, men and women, children and babies, wheelbarrow men pushing their squeaking vehicles, and shouting coolies carrying loads suspended from the bamboo poles, warning those before and behind to clear the way!

It was almost dark in the very narrow busy street of the city as Woody Heroine passed quickly along until she stopped at her own home. It was a large stone dwelling-house and the two red lanterns had already been lighted as the little girl gently pushed open the unbarred door calling as she entered, "M-ma!" A tall slender woman, whose hair was already showing advancing years, answered to the love call of the girl and eagerly listened, as the story of the day was told. Not quite all, for the most important was kept until late in

the evening when the lessons having been prepared and the evening meal finished and bowls removed, the father and mother were seated in the guest hall and the time seemed opportune for confession of the new faith of the little girl. Woody Heroine's father was a large man—tall, broad-shouldered, with a scanty beard of white that gave him a most patriarchal appearance. With his long pipe in his mouth and half-reclining in one of the red-cushioned teakwood chairs he listened, without a gesture or word, to the strange words his child was uttering. "Jesus, Son of the true God." "He was so good and loving to every one, can't help loving Him;" "Love to pray to Him and He always answers;" "Want to be known as His disciple;" "Next Sunday in the Jesus chapel, so many girls going to confess Him!" "Want to be baptized in His name."

This last was too much! The old man started up in wild fury, and from his lips, quivering with passion, and with one long powerful arm extended and emphasizing each outburst of pent-up rage, came the vehement denunciation of the "Jesus doctrine" and those who had so bewitched his child! His child! His own dearly loved Woody Heroine! The honoured son was not present, and for the time being seemed forgotten and all life centred for the moment about the child of his old age, the light and joy and pride of the home. Was it for this that he had consented to send his precious child to the

foreigner's school? He had first taught her at home and the earnest pleadings of the girl, when her friends commenced attending the girls school in the city, had been yielded to, for when had he ever denied his Woody Heroine anything she had asked? But it must end here. "Your Jesus! Never let me hear the word again, girl. From this moment let it be as forgotten. Never are you to notice one of these dreadful people if you meet them. Never must you go near that chapel again. Never must you think again of those things you have told me this night. Give me the books. Give me that Book with the strange tales in it that I have listened to as to a prattling child not knowing whereof it speaks. There—they shall be burned—weep not—'twill do you no good. Forget it all. Tomorrow your wise mother will find plenty of shoes to be embroidered and work of a practical kind that will fit you for a useful, happy future."

And the old man, relenting at the sight and sound of the wild weeping of Woody Heroine, patted her glossy black braid that hung far down her back, dangling from the end a gorgeous red silk tassel. The girl's large frightened eyes were downcast and the slight form suffused with sobs. The promise was silently given with the nod of her head, that she would never again visit or speak with the Christians, and the old man knew his child's word could be trusted. Disobedience was unknown in that respectable household.

The family settled again into the former state of monotony, with no little girl tripping away to school at early daylight and returning at night with the thrilling tales of mission experiences. Seldom did she leave the large roomy house and long and tedious were the days spent with the embroidery in her hand, or occasionally leaving it for the serving of tea to her father's guests. To all outward appearances, Woody Heroine had "forgotten" as she was bidden to do and never had the subject of the "Jesus doctrine" been mentioned. In the Mohammedan home there are no idols, so the little girl was not tested here, nor are girls in attendance at the public gathering of the worshippers.

But a strange series of unhappy disasters had come to the hitherto prosperous home. The old man, as he returned from his shop each night, carried a troubled expression on his face. He ate little and smoked more and any interruption to his deep reveries called forth such explosions of impatience as caused the wife and daughter to hasten to another part of the house. Then one day there were callers—men; angry, loud-voiced, and after many hours of quibbling over prices, they went away with a large paper carefully written and signed. And all of the next day the mother wept and refused to eat and then it was that Woody Heroine was told that the large airy home was no longer theirs and that others were coming to live there, and they were to move to the little rooms at

the rear where the not used bits of furniture had been stored.

And the old man became still more silent and irritable as the months and years passed. The "big brother" of the family seemed to be always at words with the father until the long absences from home were more to be desired than his presence. Very fine clothes did "Big brother" wear—long, brocaded silken gowns. Woody Heroine wished that she might have a new one herself—it had been so long since the last one was bought—way back in the days when she went to—but those days were forbidden even as thoughts. And then one awful night a loud knocking came at the barred doors. The new residents were angry that they were awakened and with scoldings roused Woody Heroine's father to tell him his good-for-nothing son was locked in the city jail and had sent for the father to come to his rescue as the trial was to begin at midnight.

It was early morning when the old man came stumbling back to the house, followed by the son whose drooping head and lagging footsteps told of the shame he had endured. It was a very unhappy day in the home—that day that followed. No one ate rice or the beef that was so carefully prepared by the old mother. One outburst of rage after another came from the father and the son sat with no words of defence.

Woody Heroine understood it better as the days

followed and she saw one family relic after another carried out of the house and sold, until the barely necessary articles for the tiny rooms were left. The coarsest of food came upon the table and less and less of it as the days passed. Silk gowns were known no more. Her own and her mother's silk-covered wadded garments for the cold winter days had long ago disappeared, and as the rainy, bleak days of Chinese New Year came on, Woody Heroine and her mother shivered in the blue cotton single garments.

One evening about this time, after the old father and his son had been served and then Woody Heroine and her mother had silently eaten at the second table of the partly cold rice and bits of meat, and the bowls and chopsticks had been washed and laid away on the little shelf near the old range, the man walked restlessly back and forth in the little open space dividing his rooms from the great house in front.

He stopped in his pacings and called to his child in a tone her little heart had long hungered for—oh, how many, many days since there had been heard that voice! Woody Heroine quickly came from in front of the brick stove where she was trying to make the wet wood burn. She gave her father one wonderful look of devotion from her large eyes. She stood before him respectfully—not the little girl of six years ago, but a rather tall, slender young woman with hair now twisted on the back of her

head, each glossy hair in absolutely the right place. Her cheeks were still wearing the brilliant hue that nature had given them and as she smiled into her father's face, deep dimples showed themselves, and the father sighed a mighty sigh that almost resembled a groan. He was lounging in one of the straight-back chairs, the red cushions in the comfortable guest-room furniture had gone with the loved home long since. The figure of the old man was gaunt and emaciated, showing the ravaging marks of some disease. The hair and beard were now deeply streaked with white—the flesh hung in loose folds about the drooping mouth that held the pipe.

"Girl, my girl," and the tones were full of love, "come here. Stand close to me. I want to tell you something. No, I want to ask you something." And Woody Heroine came closer and stood respectfully by the side of the father, gently touching his loose sleeve with loving pats as it lay on the arm of the chair. "What is it, father?" she asked softly by way of encouragement as the old man hesitated. Again a mighty sigh and he began. "Girl, have you forgotten the things that long ago I told you must be forgotten—that Man you said was the Son of the true God,—Jesus?" Something in the eager tone of her father gave Woody Heroine confidence and she answered very quietly, "Forgotten? No, father, I have never forgotten Him. Oh, I couldn't do that! In everything else I

have obeyed you." "Have you ever seen that foreigner? Have you ever been near that chapel? Have you ever met and talked with those Jesus people?" And to all his eager questionings the girl answered with shining eyes, "No, my honoured father, I have never seen them; I have obeyed you always—all but the one thing I could not do: *I could not forget Him,* for, father, I still love Him, and O father, forgive me, but I have talked with Him every day!"

No angry outburst followed this confession, but another great sigh broke from the old man, and his long bony hand reached for the hand of his child, and he drew her to him as he said, "I want to tell you all about it. I must tell you. Girl, *your God has beaten me!* I thought I would get you and our home from His influence by keeping you away from that chapel. I hated Him and His teachings so! I was jealous of your love for Him. But He is stronger than I! Look at our once happy home! Since the day I vowed I would have none of this new religion about me, nothing but disaster and trouble has come to me. Where is our once beautiful home? Possessed by strangers! Where is the prosperous shop that once was owned by the proudest man in the business streets? Gone to pay the debts of the worthless son whose doings are breaking my heart. Look at your mother! No longer does she entertain—no longer is her face seen at the door in the twilight hours. Look at you,

my little child—these hands rough and soiled with the work that prevents the use of the fine stitches any longer. Winter is here and the brush is almost gone, the rice bag is empty, there is no dried meat for the cold days, and we are all hungry to death. My hair is white, but who honours the old man now? This racking pain in my side torments me on my scant bed or sitting. And child, I've been thinking of what it all means. *Are you right and am I wrong?* You said only blessings came to those who worshipped the 'true God' and His blessings were withheld from those who would not worship Him. Do you think there is any way for His anger to be turned away from us?" The old man was now the eager questioner and the girl, Woody Heroine, could she answer? It was long years, six long years, since she had heard a word of the Heavenly Father and His love. Could she remember enough of it to tell her father? She must try—this was His answer to the prayer of the years, and drawing near the father who so long had been the terror of her young life, she put one arm protectingly around the trembling figure and from her eager thankful heart poured out the long pent-up story—all that she remembered as a little girl in the mission school. Long into the night they thus talked—the old mother listening too, her face showing part fear and part expectancy that now a turn would come in the affairs of the home.

"And do you think the foreigner is still in the

city?" Oh, yes, Woody Heroine was sure and she would find out the next day. "Go," said the old man: "learn all you can and come back and tell me." And the following morning found the girl dressed in a gown of her mother's which, though too large, was clean and showed a less number of patches than her own, and with hair beautifully combed, she called at the great school where her former "missionary" was now in charge. It was a happy moment when Woody Heroine stood before the teacher and asked "Do you recognize me?" One moment of hesitation and the foreigner exclaimed as she took the girl's hands in her own, "It is Woody Heroine!" And then the long story was told and the future planned for, while the missionary asked if she might call and see the old people in their great distress. That evening the call was made and a broken-spirited old man received his guest with truest courtesy. Breaking into loud sobbing and weeping, he brokenly told his story and pleaded that his child might again have the blessings that his hatred of the Jesus doctrine had denied to her.

And Woody Heroine entered the Bible Training School, where she was later baptized as a Christian, and had the joy of seeing the brother brought to Christ and enter the boys' school, where he redeemed the wild days and brought comfort to the heart of the old father. Heart failure brought the days of the old patriarch to a close, but Woody Heroine

eagerly cared for him in his last illness telling him over and over again of the love of the Christ and seeing the tired eyes of the man gladden with hope. Again the years passed and Woody Heroine's graduation day rolled around. Already she had brought into the school two other young women of the same faith as that of her childhood and saw them also acknowledged followers of the Christ.

Today a home where the aged mother is lovingly cared for, and the brother is happily married with a Christian wife and a beautiful little girl, is often visited by the radiant Woody Heroine as she journeys there during vacation time when she can slip away for a few days from the busy life of service where she is being spent for the Master's use.

III

CHI POPO

CHI Popo stood in the door of her little mud hut, pondering. A group of girls, books in hand, had just gone up the narrow street, laughing and playing, full of such spirit as girls seldom knew in that part of the crowded Chinese city, and Chi Popo was thinking of all that it meant—and wondering! In the back of the little place she called home was a tiny girl of the same size as these girls—at the present moment down on her knees before the wooden tub of soiled clothes that she had been told to wash. Although ten years of age, the girl had not had her feet bound as yet and the time was approaching when this must be done. But Chi Popo was a wise old woman, and she had heard that in many parts of the great land girls were not having their feet transformed into "lilies" even for the sake of a husband—and more wonderful yet to relate—many men were choosing these girls with the large, natural feet, in preference to the dainty lily-footed girls of renown!

But today it was not the question of the binding of little Yung Chen's feet that gave anxious thought to the old grandmother. What about that new school

around the corner! It was now several weeks since it had been formally opened for girls—the first of its kind in the large city. Intense interest had been taken in the project by every one in Suh Sung, when the tiny schoolhouse was erected, and the workmen were daily surrounded with the curious men and women and children, as they watched the strange building with its many windows of glass, the wooden flooring, the little platform and all the other accessories to a schoolroom, put into place! Then came the desks and the benches—then the wonderful black-board, and finally the new teacher arrived—and who should it be but a woman, and a young woman at that! This for a time seemed to settle the destiny of the school. Surely a woman didn't know enough to teach any one, but a few girls were persuaded to try the school, and the news of their wonderful days in the new building, studying the same books taught in the temple schools for boys, singing, drilling, knitting, sewing—all so amazed the populace, that ere long every red seat in the building was filled!

Chi Popo did so covet this chance for the little grandchild, but—Yung Chen was all she had in the world! Her father had been the dearly loved son of his widowed mother, and after his death Chi Popo had determined that her life should be given to the study of the three religions of the country, but especially to that of Taoism. When but a mere child, Chi Popo had been taught to read by her father, an

official of first rank in the distant province where she was born. She had been the idol of the father's heart and he had great pride in the achievement of this child of his old years. When he died, all the family property was seized and the remnant of the proud old man's family had fled into Anhwei Province and found refuge in the little city of Suh Sung. It was a beautiful town, situated on the banks of the stream that flowed for miles through the hill country. Many temples of renown were nestled among these hills, and the heartbroken daughter, stripped of the wealth and luxury and comfort that had been hers, quietly lived her life with the husband and child who had fled with her. Then death claimed both husband and son, and Chi Popo, yet a comparatively young woman, found herself alone with little Yung Chen. Going to the distant temple of the Taoist nuns, one day, Chi Popo returned after a visit with the garb of the order upon her, and thenceforth was known in the city for her devotion to religious things. Early and late was the incense burning in the tiny little hut, and the hours of the day were largely spent by the lonely woman in the study of the books of the gods, while little Yung Chen cooked the rice and washed the clothes and swept the floor.

But this school for girls! Should Chi Popo break away from her pride, and give the dear little girl out there in the back of the hut the chance the other girls of the neighbourhood were having? If

there had been any tuition fee, Chi Popo could not have thought of education for Yung Chen, but it was a free school. Perhaps it was not fair to the child to withhold such a blessing from her. She had already been taught many characters—Chi Popo herself had laboriously taught them as the child leaned against her at the table reading by the light that came from the tiny flame of pith wick in the dish of mustard oil.

There was much to consider, however. This was a school where the Jesus doctrine was taught;—some said it was a very dangerous thing to send a girl there, for the teacher of the school was a most enthusiastic Christian, and she had thrown a spell around some of the children and they were now talking in their homes of this new religion. Some parents were trying whipping to rid the girls of this spirit; Chi Popo had never been harsh to the precious little girl now left to her—she would not want to have such a thing happen to Yung Chen. But then—it simply could not be, had she not instilled into the heart of the child all the deep things of the great teachers of her people, and was not the child destined to become a nun of great renown when some day she should disappear forever behind the walls of the grey temple out yonder among the hills?

No, there was no such danger for little Yung Chen, and meantime it would be best to let her have the privilege of attending the school with the

other girls and learning there much faster than she would do at home. So many calls, moreover, were coming these days, for Chi Popo to visit in the homes of the people. There was great sickness and suffering everywhere, and Chi Popo's fame had gone abroad for the prayers she wrote and sold in little rolls. They had been most effective in many cases, and the old woman was truly busy with her great missionary work. Once little Yung Chen was safe in school for the day, Chi Popo would be free to answer these calls.

It was settled. Yung Chen should go to school—providing there was an empty seat at this late day of entering. So the next morning the little girl, freshly washed and dressed and wearing a new pair of red shoes tied with blue strings about her plump ankles, held the hand of Popo as they went through the dark street at an early hour, for school commenced at six o'clock—in fact, so eager were the girls to begin their long happy day at the school, that many of them were known to go at five o'clock; while it was scarcely daylight, returning for a few minutes in the middle of the morning for the breakfast of rice.

There were no empty seats in the little day-school, but as a number of the late comers were occupying half of the seats of other girls, little Yung Chen was told she might do the same, and the happy new life commenced! Chi Popo herself hastened away before the teacher had an opportunity to talk

with her, for her attention was called at once to the grey garb of the Taoist nun when she brought the tiny new pupil into the bright schoolroom.

The days went on, and for Yung Chen a wonderful life had commenced. Night after night she went home to tell to Popo all the things that she was learning. One day she returned to say there had been no lessons from the regular books, but the girls had recited some beautiful story from another book that Yung Chen had heard the teacher reading from each morning but had not understood very well. Then they sang and then the pastor came in and talked and then the whole school had been lined up, two by two and had been marched to the little "foreign temple" next door where there had been more singing by many people, men and women, as well as the children, and then a long talk had been given by this "pastor," who had said so many wonderful things that Yung Chen could not remember it all! And Chi Popo listened and said to herself, "Ah, the dreaded day has come! My child has been listening to the foreigner's religion!" She drew Yung Chen to her and carefully asked for every word she could remember. But there was little after all to it all—and the big black eyes of the child were as bright as ever and the smile just the same, and she hugged the old woman in the same eager, loving way! No harm had been done, so far, but Chi Popo determined she would keep a very careful watch over the little one.

One day, some weeks later, Yung Chen said as she was dressing for school: "Today is *li-bi-yu* (worship day), Grandmother. I must wear my best blue gown that I wear when you take me to the temples. We all march into the chapel this day. Oh, I wish you could go too and hear the singing! We children are going to stand up and sing. It is a beautiful song! Don't you think you could go just this one day?" The old woman thought. There were many prayers to be delivered—quite an order had come for them from a distant village, and Chi Popo must not fail the suffering families, for the prayer-rolls were to be offered before the gods that very day.

"Not this time, child," answered the grandmother. "Tell me when the next li-bi-yu comes around and I will try to go—just to hear you sing." Happy, the little girl ran off to Sunday school, and, after the story of the loving Saviour who had invited all little girls to "Come unto Him" had been told, little Yung Chen, with many others, knelt with her teacher in the little schoolroom and promised to love and worship Jesus as long as she lived. With a gladder heart than she had ever known, Yung Chen flew along the street to the little hut home and right into the arms of Chi Popo, who had returned from her day's work and found the place very lonely and empty without the loved child.

That evening, by the light of the pith-wick lamp, little Yung Chen tried to tell the story of the dear

Saviour and His wonderful love for her! A terrible fear crept into the heart of Chi Popo! Who was this that her little grandchild, her one treasure, had given such a love to! She could no longer suffer such a rival to enter the child's heart—she would end the fear and uncertainty forever, and understand for herself these new things that were going on in the name of a religion. She herself knew the three religions of her people. They filled her empty life with occupying thought, but this that Yung Chen told her was all so different. And look at the child's face! It was positively radiant! No such expression was in the child's eyes when Chi Popo told her the teachings of the great leaders of *her* religion!

A sudden resolution seized the old grandmother. Jumping to her feet, she peered out into the darkness of night. Already the shop doors were up, the few men on the narrow street at this hour, were hurrying to their homes, but a great resolve had taken possession of Chi Popo. Turning back into the hut, Chi Popo took the hand of Yung Chen in her own and half whispered as she drew her towards the door, "Child, come with me. Take me to your teacher. I want to talk with her of these things you have told me." And in her heart she was saying, "And I too want to know the happiness my little one has found."

In the little guest-room of the day-school that evening, far into the night, sat the faithful teacher,

telling the old, old story of the Man of Galilee, to the eager-faced Taoist nun. On the floor, with her head leaning against the old grandmother, lay the child, fast asleep, but the two women talked on. Chi Popo had much to ask—Oh, so many things were opening before her and she must learn them all. Before them on the table lay the open Book—that new strange Book from which Yung Chen had heard the sweet story that had charmed her young heart that day. At last, the teacher said: "And now, as the hour is late, may I pray to our Jesus and tell Him all about you? He can help you to understand and so much better than all my poor words." She knelt at the chair while Chi Popo roused the sleeping child, then stood respectfully, watching the kneeling figure before her and not knowing quite what she herself should do. The simple prayer of the girl teacher was quite different from the written prayers that Chi Popo herself had written—why, it was just *talking* to this Heavenly Father! How simple it all was!

This was but the beginning of the long talks that Chi Popo had with the day-school teacher, in the months that followed. The constant visiting between the mission house and the hut of the well-known Taoist nun created not a little interest in the city, and when after deep study of the Christian religion and heart conviction, Chi Popo, laid aside the grey garb and received Christian baptism, the entire community was stirred. In the little school-

house on Friday afternoons when the meetings were held for women—the relatives mostly of the school-girls, Chi Popo's ringing words of testimony meant more to the interest of the cause of Jesus Christ than the preaching of a dozen missionaries!

It was no surface conversion with the old woman, but as she had given herself unsparingly to the religion of her people, so too, when the Light of the Gospel of Love, the Love that never faileth, flooded her soul, Chi Popo gave all that she had to the great purpose that had been born within her, to telling her people of her new-found joy! After a year, she left little Yung Chen with friends and in the care of the teacher of the day-school, and went herself to the Bible Training School in Kiukiang, where for two years she devoted all her time to the study of God's Word. Then, under commission of the church, she was sent to the province of Anhwei where she was the first Bible woman in opening the church in a certain large city.

Here for two years or more, she was busy with the work that she found on every hand. She had a very natural gift for speaking, a fine clear voice, a most appealing manner and her bright, happy face attracted crowds to the meetings.

In the midst of her work one day, a letter was handed to her, bearing the seal of an official of the government. She tore open the red envelope and carefully adjusting her big goggles, sat down to read the contents of the letter. It proved to be a

communication from her cousin, who held office in the great capital of Peking. He had heard, so the letter read, with astonishment, that his cousin, known far and wide among the people of the family clan for her devotion to the religion of the country, had deliberately renounced all the belief of the past and had accepted the Jesus doctrine and its teachings. Moreover, he learned further, that his honoured cousin was actually a public teacher now, of this same religion, and he was so distressed that neither day or night since this terrible calamity had come upon the family had he been able to rest. Now his mind was made up—he was coming as fast as travel was possible, to ascertain for himself the truth of the case and, to sum up in everyday parlance, to talk this nonsense out of his good cousin's head!

Chi Popo laid down the letter. What could she do about it and how could she prepare for such an interview as this letter indicated was now upon her! This cousin was no ordinary individual. Had he not taken the second degree many years ago, in the old Examination Halls in their provincial capital, and was he not known as a man most clever and shrewd in his arguments? Well, she herself could not presume to give any instructions to this coming visitor, but she knew of a plan that never failed. Taking up her Bible, now her constant companion, (for wherever she was seen on the streets, in the homes of the people, in the little chapel, the Book

was always under her arm—on rainy, damp days always carefully tied up in a gaily-coloured handkerchief), she bowed her head for a moment over the precious treasure, then rising she found her pencil, and settled herself for the task before her, turning down a page here, marking one there, from cover to cover she went, with eager, trembling hands, but with her eyes bright with the intensity of the purpose that she was pursuing.

Some ten days later, the great official from the north arrived at the Anhwei city, accompanied by his man-servant. Great was the greeting between the old Popo and this man—much younger than herself, but whose appearance in the streets of the city, with his official paraphernalia caused no little commotion! After the customary courtesy had been extended, and tea and cakes had been served and many questions asked as to health, wealth, weather, and other essential points of interest, the subject dreaded by both parties and so inevitably to be attacked as soon as possible, was broached. "Now, good and honourable cousin," commenced the great man, "tell me how it all came about that you, the one so well versed in the truth as taught by the great teacher Confucius and his followers, should at this late stage of life have been so befuddled as to cast it all away and plunge into this new religion that is so apart from the life of our own nation? What *is* this Jesus doctrine, anyway? Tell me what its teachings embrace?"

There was a pause, then Chi Popo rose to answer the distinguished guest, and clearing her throat, commenced, "Highly honoured brother, it is a very hard question that you ask of me. You are a great man—one of vast learning and wide experience, while I—am only a woman, and the Great Teacher to whom you have just referred, did he not say of us that we were but 'mindless, soulless creatures'? How, then, can you expect that I with no mind and said to have no soul, could attempt to tell *you* of the teachings of this great and new religion that has been taught to me? I would not presume to be your teacher, I am too unworthy for that, but I had learned of your coming, and that its object was to hear of the religion that I frankly tell you I have adopted. I have therefore prepared the way for you to ascertain for yourself whether there is anything in this so-called new religion." Stepping to the shelf at the side of the room opposite the entrance, Chi Popo took up her Bible and advancing towards her cousin, book in hand, she held it out to him saying very simply and earnestly: "Here is the book that is called the Bible. It contains the whole truth regarding the Jesus religion. It tells the prophecy of His coming and the story of His life on earth, and how we here may know the way of salvation. Honoured brother, take this Book and follow the readings from the first of the Book through to the other end, wherever I have turned down the pages. I ask this one thing of you: go

to your inn where you are lodging, and spend three days in thoughtfully reading these marked portions, and at the end of that time, if you will come here to me, I will be glad then to talk with you." A few more words passed between the two relatives, then thanking his cousin for her thoughtfulness he took the Book in his hand and departed, promising to come again, in three days.

And Chi Popo, as she told the story afterwards said, as her great black eyes danced with light and joy, "You know, I didn't tell my cousin, but I determined to spend those three days myself, alone in my home, in fasting and prayer, for I knew the Holy Spirit would accomplish what all the talking I might try to do, could never do!"

And she did! Only the occasional cup of tea and a bit of something absolutely necessary for the preservation of life, and the rest of the time, old Chi Popo was spending on her knees in the little schoolhouse, behind the closed doors where she might be alone with her God! Oh, that such passion for the souls of our unsaved friends and relatives might come into the hearts of those of us who have prayed for years and yet "wondered" that God did not answer! "And Jesus saith unto them, Because of your unbelief! For—this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting!"

And God honoured the faith of the old Bible woman, alone in the heart of black heathenism, where she dared to test and believe His promises!

The three days were ended and the evening of the last day, as Chi Popo sat alone in her room, the knock came on the front door, then without waiting for answer, the door was quickly pushed open and in rushed the official—and there is something definitely important that causes a rush among the old-time officials of China! With the Book in his hand, open still at the last marking, the great man hurriedly took the seat of honour offered to him, and with eager face demanded: "Cousin, how is it that you have never told any of us of this great Book? Why, it is the greatest I have ever seen. Nothing in all Chinese literature contains what this Book reveals! It is wonderful! Sit down and tell me everything—tell me what it has meant to you!"

And with glowing face, old Chi Popo commenced her wonderful witnessing to the truth as found in Jesus Christ. She was no longer afraid of the official and his learning. God had heard her prayer and the Holy Spirit had accomplished His work in her cousin's heart—it had brought convincing knowledge of the truth itself. Late into the night they sat, while out of the fulness of her rich experience Chi Popo told how the Light of the Gospel had penetrated her soul and of the joy and gladness that now filled her life. But she went on: "You must hear more than I can tell you. I am but an infant in these great truths. I wish you would get on the boat and go to Kiukiang, where the missionaries live and where you will find so many in the

schools to teach you. There are Christians of long experience there—do go, and learn all you can from them!"

So it was decided that the seeker after the truth—for such he now avowed himself to be—should take the night boat up the Yangtse River to the mission station of Kiukiang. He arrived the following day and according to directions made his way to the compound. He found, upon reaching the home of the missionaries, that every one had gone to the church, where a series of evangelistic meetings were being held. And leaving his baggage with his servant at the gate of the compound, he hastened in the direction pointed out to him and for the first time in his life found himself in a Christian church. Taking a seat pointed out to him by a student, our friend was soon deeply engrossed in the message of the Cross that was being given. Many curious glances were directed at the great man, as becoming more and more lost in the subject of the preacher, he left his seat and moved nearer to the front. Over and over again during the discourse, this happened, until when with eager voice the preacher closed his message with a passionate appeal to those who wanted to know the Truth that it might make them free, to come to the front of the church and kneel in prayer, the congregation was astonished to see the great man, everything about him pointing to his official rank, leave his seat among the students and hasten to the altar. He

stood for a moment, uncertain what to do next, as he was the first one to reach the front, then bowing respectfully to the preacher, he asked, "May I tell you why I am here?" Permission being quickly given, the man turned and faced the eight hundred people, men and women, hundreds of students, gathered in the church, and simply told his story. "And now" said he, "I am here, as your representative Chi Popo directed me. I have heard this message today. It is all in accord with what I have been reading. It is very wonderful. This is the kind of God I have longed for all my life. It is the kind of religion that will change our whole nation. I am here to ask how I may know Him—will you help me?" And stretching out his hands towards the congregation of Christians, the great man turned a pleading face like that of a little child, towards the people.

The pastor called the Christians to their knees while from many parts of the room came others who had long halted "between two opinions" and knelt with the great man from the north, while a volume of prayer went up from scores of earnest Christians all over the building.

And that afternoon a soul was born again! From his knees rose the great man and with a quiet peace resting upon the features that a few hours before had known such unrest, he witnessed to his belief in the Heavenly Father as the true God, in His Son as the Saviour of the world, and as his Saviour. In

closing, he expressed the desire to use the remainder of his life in giving the good news to others, and asked that many there would pledge themselves to do the same, expressing deep regret that so few in the country knew the truth!

The next morning, as chapel services were being conducted in the various mission buildings, the new convert to Christianity appeared at the gate of the hospital, asking for Dr. Stone. He was told that chapel was going on, at the mention of which he quickly answered; "That is just what I want. I will go in." Finding himself in the little chapel crowded with nurses, patients, and servants and employees of the institution, he was recognized and asked to the little platform. He accepted the invitation at once and there witnessed for Christ. After the meeting, he said to Dr. Stone, "I spent most of last night in the yamens talking of the new religion and of the light that has come to me. I must leave the city in a few hours, but—is there no place where I can talk to others of this great blessing that has come to my heart? I have been so late in finding it, now I must use every minute in telling our people of what is waiting for them and urging them to accept." He was asked to go to the Training School across the street, where the students and faculty assembled and listened to another passionate appeal from the lips of this man who had had all that the religions of his country could give him, but who had only found satisfaction and rest

for his longing heart in the message of the Man of Galilee!

As he finally hurried away to board the steamer that was to carry him down the Yangtse River, he said to us, "I am going back to Peking, to resign my position and pack my things and I intend to bring my family to the capital of our province. The rest of my life shall be spent in trying to teach our people of the wonderful God who has come into my life!"

And he kept his word. If one will go to one of the great cities of the mighty flowing river that passes through the central part of the country, on one of the leading streets of the place, they will find a brightly lighted chapel where the "Good News" of the Gospel is being preached every night of the week the year round. And the self-supporting pastor, a man of keen knowledge of the world, one familiar with the teachings of the three great religions of the country, stands with radiant face and with compelling eloquence, proclaiming the old story of Divine Love, to the masses as they fill the chapel room.

Let no one despise the plea of the missionary today for the opening of ten thousand little day-schools throughout the eighteen provinces of China! When this vision of what these schools will do has been realised, and hundreds of children in the city, town, and village have been gathered into these primary schools, they will go out again, back into

the homes of heathen blackness, to tell there what they have learned from the lips of the Christian Chinese girl-teacher, and the words of the man of old who proclaimed the glad day of deliverance from sin for the race, shall be fulfilled, for "a little child shall lead them"!

IV

THE SILENT BLESSING

"HALIAO tien o! Tsiang tsen-mo kai o!" ("Heaven is so black! O, what shall I do?") The heart-breaking cry of a woman came from the little mud hut by the side of the road, and almost simultaneously the report of firecrackers burst upon the night air and the figure of a man who had lighted them quickly ran within doors. For a few seconds only the continued explosion was heard and then again on the clear warm evening air rang out the cry, "O'tzen-mo yiu chae-go ku ming o! o! Muh yiu yen ko kao o!!" ("What a bitter life! I have no one now to depend on!") and with these words, a tall, slender young woman ran frantically from the hut, stretching her long thin arms heavenward with a gesture of frenzy. A group of men and women followed, all talking at the same time in loud, excited voices and evidently trying to comfort the distracted one.

Death had just entered the little home of the woman, who in the madness of her grief refused to be comforted. Farmer Yang, her husband, had been ill but a few days—an evil spirit had evidently pos-

sessed him from the first, for his body was burning with heat and he refused to answer intelligently the many inquiries of the devoted little woman who sought, with all means known to her, to relieve his sufferings. Friends and neighbours had been crowding into the room—the one room of the tiny hut,—from the hour it was noised abroad that he was ill, and sympathy had been shown unstintedly for the family of two. The many useful herbs and other home remedies known in every Chinese house had been tried. The fattest and best of the small flock of chickens had produced wonderfully strengthening broth for the sick man. The native doctor from the nearby village had been in attendance, but his remedies had all failed to act. The priests of the three religions had been called in and their services most generously given, but without one last word, the spirit of the sick man had taken its flight.

The heavens were indeed black for the widow! She was an orphan girl from a far-distant province, betrothed in infancy, and having been brought up by her husband's family, had at last married him at the appointed time and for several happy years had lived with him on the little stretch of rice-field country—lived a quiet, peaceful existence. Theirs had been a rather unusual life—never had a hard word been spoken to the girl. Working in his fields from daybreak until often during the harvest season far into the night, when the moon

was up, Farmer Yang had been perfectly content with plenty of work, a home with his woman to provide the necessary cooking, and to call on when he was overworked and needed her assistance in the field. And when the night would come, together they would sit on stools of the same size, placed side by side out under the great wide-spreading camphor tree that shaded the house from the sun of summer and the rains and wild winds of winter.

No son, however, had ever come to bless that home. Each feast day the pilgrimage was made to the shrine yonder, there to burn incense and make the heart-cry heard for the longed-for boy. But never had rebuke or upbraiding been given the childless woman. "Some day the gods will hear and send him," had been the comforting words of the young farmer.

But now—Oh, black indeed were the heavens! Bitter the cup she must drink! Well may she cry out from her soul's agony, "What shall I do!" A childless widow! Was this to be the end, after all, of her happy life? Her husband! The one in all the earth who loved her! He had gone—gone into the Great Unknown and never, never might he know happiness in the great hereafter with no son to worship at his grave! Never would his son kneel before the ancestral tablet to offer homage to his kind and honourable name! What had been her sin—his wife's—that she should thus have denied her husband's name that which was his right? And

she, herself? Well may she wail over the hopelessness of life. Life? No, endless death for her, the woman, for by this her sin, her failure to perform that which was her duty as a wife, she must end her life in disgrace, no one to look to, no son to lean on, no strong young arm to support her in her old age, and then, when death should claim her—Oh the blackness of the future! No son to pray his mother's soul into a state of bliss—endless eternity, a wandering spirit, uncared for, unloved!

The next day saw the burial of Farmer Yang's body. Out yonder under the low trees, on the far corner of his own land, the grave was made and the rounded mound was piled high with the many paper-made gifts offered to the departed soul—then the match was lighted and amid the beating of the gongs and the wild cries of the friends that rent the air, the beautiful house, the boat for sailing, the table of delicacies for feasting, were wafted away to meet the varied needs of the departed one.

When it was all over, Widow Yang slowly rose from the ground where she had thrown herself in the prostrating grief of her soul, and with her old uncle—her husband's uncle—painfully made her way on the little bound feet back to the deserted farmhouse. At the sight of it, again her grief broke all bounds and she dropped on the ground at the doorstep and laid her head on the tiny stool that had been the favourite seat of her husband. But the old man, who had lingered after all others

had left, had a purpose in the visit and with impatience bade the distracted woman to rise and see if there were not tea to be found somewhere—he must soon return to his house and was thirsty and needed a refreshing drink before he could proceed on his way.

Wearily the heart-broken woman complied. Henceforth there was nothing in life for her but to do the bidding of her dead husband's relatives. She rose and entered the hut—was soon busy in fanning a handful of dry brush into a flame, and reappeared handing her aged guest a cup of tea. The man was large-boned, broad-shouldered, with small keen black eyes, and after sipping of the tea, he motioned to the woman, who stood silently and respectfully beside him, to take the other stool. Hesitating for a moment, for how could she take the accustomed seat beside this unsympathetic relative? she acquiesced. The old man set the teacup on the hard well-swept ground, crossed his long bony limbs, and commenced.

"Well, girl, now he's gone, what are you going to do? You can't live here any longer." A startled look from the young woman, and then with a pleading tone she said: "O Great-Uncle, there is no other place I can ever stay. This is home and this place is mine and—I am not afraid. I want to live right here always."

The old man cleared his throat, spat on the ground and folding his long arms tightly about him-

self, answered in the most self-composed manner: "Stay here you cannot. What is more, this isn't your property. It belongs to me and my family now."

Widow Yang quickly rose from her seat, went inside the hut, where she remained for a few minutes, and then returned with a long red envelope in her hand, bound by numerous strings of uncertain colour. She took the stool again as the old man, with a nod of the mouth and chin more than of the head, motioned her to be seated. Slowly she untied the package and spread before the man a huge paper—one glance revealing the red stamp and indicating that it was a legal document. "Here are the deeds, Great-Uncle. My Lao Pon had them all written long ago and left the house and fields to me. True, I never thought I would be left alone." A great sob broke from the woman, but an impatient poke from the elbow of the aged relative caused the woman to stifle her grief and give her attention to business.

And the business was, namely, that she was to understand very clearly that any claim she might make to the hut and fields would not for a moment be recognized by her dead husband's people. That the deceased should have thought it possible for him to thus dispose of his property was ridiculous! If there had been a mother-in-law living, would the widow have dared to consider herself free for anything except dutifully to return to the home that had

reared her and take up life there, serving the mother of her husband? And did she think because that mother-in-law happened to be dead that the rest of the family would not claim her services? Did any sane widow ever consider that it was possible for her to live alone and unto herself? As for refusing to live with the rest of the clan at the Uncle's home, well there was still a way out if she, the widow, *must* have a home of her own!

And with such words of comfort, the revered head of the family took his departure, calling out as he wended his way across the neatly swept space in front of the house: "See that you care for those papers. They must be put in a safe place. I'll see you tomorrow!"

The next few days were spent in attending to all the household duties that came to the hands of a thoughtful, care taking woman after such a change as had come to the little home. Many were the callers too, who served as constant reminders of the terrible sorrow that had come, for they were wont to go over and over again the harrowing circumstances, always ending each doleful recital with the ejaculation, "Ko lien o!" ("You are to be pitied!")

But most distressing of all, were the continual visits of Great-Uncle. He had called the day after the burial as promised and then had asked that Widow Yang should give him for safe-keeping the deeds to the property. When this had been

gently but firmly refused, great was the anger of the old man, and had he dared he would have beaten the woman into acceptance of his plan. Seeing, however, that his threats failed to move her, he went away muttering a determination to "Siang fah-tz" ("Find a way") to bring her to terms.

About a week after the new, strange, frightened life began, a delegation of the family came in a body to call. It was a warm evening, and out under the trees a clear understanding came to the widow of what the family desired of her. That hut and the accompanying fields were not lawfully hers, and it was needless for further words to be said. The place must be turned over to the clan, and if there was not one way to do it there was another. The law certainly would be appealed to and the woman would have no pity shown her if she attempted to hold out against the enforcers of the law. But to go to law with one of their own family, and a woman at that, to appear as actually defying her family—her dead husband's family—was inconceivable! She surely had lost face enough by letting that husband die with no son, to follow him to his grave! But this other would be still further offence—surely she would not force the family to this step! Now if she wished, really wished to live her own life in her own home, there was an alternative open to her. Great-Uncle had in mind a friend, a man of generous impulses and quite desirable, who would

be willing to waive the grave fact that she was a childless widow and would consent to marry her.

As though paralyzed with the revelation of the plot thus revealed, Widow Yang sat immovable. No change of colour, no movement of a muscle of her face indicated the mighty struggle going on in the heart of the silent sufferer. She waited until others in the group had added their word of favour, showing how advisable this step would be, how satisfied every member of the family would feel about it, how safe it would then be for the widow and her property. There was no refusal to comply—for what use would it have been to do so?—she was powerless in the hands of the tormentors. To appeal to law was ridiculous—she knew all too well that there would be no redress there and that she, ignorant woman that she was, would not know how to answer an official even had she courage to seek the advice of such! So the spirit of dumb submission, the result of four thousand years of self-effacement to the women of her race, rose paramount for the moment. She answered quietly that she must have time to consider and would give them their answer in a few days.

That night the little pith wick in the dish of mustard oil burned all through the hours until daylight showed on the distant horizon. Then from the tiny hut a figure emerged. A small bundle, carefully tied by the three corners of a blue muslin cloth, was laid on the ground while the heavy awkward door

was drawn to on the hinges and the long brass padlock was shut with a snap and the key withdrawn and placed in the hidden pocket of the woman's gown. A hasty glance in the direction of the adjoining farm and the huts there, but all was silent save the shrill crowing of the alert fowls.

This one sound was enough to strike terror to the heart of the fleeing woman, for it meant there was already some one astir in the hut life, for the fowls roosted in the rafters of each home and were generally the first to converse with the early riser. Widow Yang hesitated a moment. When would she see that little home again! Yonder was the sacred spot where all that filled her heart now rested—and swiftly she flew for one wild moment to that bare mound, threw herself on her face upon it and sobbed out one last good-bye word; then, rising, started as fast as her small feet would take her up the little footpath that led away from the village. Some two *li* from her home, stood another hut, close by the side of the road. Here she stopped and gave first a timid, then a more pronounced swing of the knocker, on the door. A sleepy voice answered from within, and as the woman responded to the question as to who was there, "Shih O" ("It is I"), the door was opened and a man and woman peered out. Widow Yang quickly made known her errand. She had been obliged, after all, to leave home, for it was not wise for a widow woman to live alone, but she did not want to lose

her crops. Would Farmer Li undertake to care for the tiny fields of rice and go shares on the harvest for his trouble? The eyes of the man glistened with delight, and he assured the widow that all should be as she desired. A paper? No, it was not necessary to write a paper—the farmer and his wife had been the best friends she and her dead husband had known, and they were to be trusted; and as for herself—she was but a woman—would not the testimony of the man and his wife be enough should any trouble ever arise?

And she was gone, having thrust into the hand of the woman the key to the hut and the out buildings where the grain was to be stored. By this time the sun was about showing his rosy face on the horizon, and without pausing the woman hastened on her way.

In the distant city of Kiukiang, a day's journey from the home of Widow Yang, Shihe-seng, or as more familiarly known, the "Little Doctor," was just going home to supper from the nearby hospital, when the gateman hurrying up the beautifully kept walk, lined with graceful palms that waved high over the other foliage of the garden, called to her. Turning, she saw the servant followed by a tall, slender woman whose heavy, dragging step indicated that she had come a long way and was exceedingly weary. A few minutes later saw the two women in close conversation in the guest-room of the Doctor's home—the professional woman listening with rapt

attention and most kindly interest while the other poured out from a full heart the story of her life.

"I stayed in the home of a distant relative last night," she was saying. "I came here because I do not know where else to go. My relative told me of you—that you were a friend to every one in distress and I have brought the deeds to you. Will you keep them for me? I know they are safe with you, and—I have another favour to ask. Do you think I could go to the school here where they take married women and widows? I want to study. I want to learn to read and write, and then I can care for my own property and know how to deal with my husband's people, who are my enemies."

The plans were talked over with the missionary, who was called in, and Widow Yang, though she had no money in cash, promised that her tuition should be paid from the next harvest—and she became a very happy member of the Training School family. What a new life opened before her! Everything from day to day was a revelation! She hardly knew how to talk with the other students at first, while the first sight of the foreign missionaries sent terror to her heart. All that she knew of them was from the tales she had occasionally heard from the farmers who went to the city to sell rice and other farm products and brought back such stories as they picked up from the crowded inns of the wayside. But her fear was soon gone as she found the foreigner quite inoffensive and soon she

herself really watched for the opportunity to talk with the teachers.

Three happy, wonderful months rolled away. Vacation was approaching—the long summer months and the school would be closed. Widow Yang must return to her country home. But she had talked with the head teacher at the school, and he had given her wholesome advice, had told her that she could not have done a wiser thing than deposit the precious deeds with the "Little Doctor" —a woman of her nationality but trained in worldly affairs both at home and abroad. She was to take heart for the future—apply herself to her studies and some day she would be heard and given justice in the courts where new laws were already being enforced and where any woman of education could today have a hearing! It was all most encouraging, and when the day for home-going came around, Widow Yang bade her new friends good-bye without intimating in the slightest way any apprehension of the result of going back to the country. She would return to re-enter the happy school in the fall.

The summer had nearly passed, when one day a letter came to the teacher who had so kindly advised Widow Yang, asking that he would in some way send word to the missionary that her pupil was in serious trouble. She had returned to her home as planned, but a few days afterwards a company of men had surrounded her little hut home and she had been kidnapped and carried away to another

village, where she was forcibly married to a friend of the Great-Uncle! She was now a prisoner at her new husband's home and was being kept there in this manner until she would surrender the deeds of her property. The letter asked that word be sent to the "Little Doctor" not to give up the deeds to any one.

The second rebellion was then on in great China. The plains were filled with fighting troops. The "Little Doctor" and her missionary friend were in the hills and it was impossible for them to reach the woman even if they had known how to find her. Summer ripened into the early fall and it was time for the schools to reopen. The sudden uprising had died away as quickly as it had sprung up and the many missionaries were all eager to begin work again.

The first day after the "Little Doctor" returned from the hills, she found a group of men waiting to interview her. They were the relatives of Widow Yang and asked—most courteously at first—for the deeds that had been left with her.

Very firm and decided was the answer—let the woman be produced and the deeds should be put into *her* hand. No one in the country should wrest those papers from their hiding-place, but if the owner asked in person for them she should have them. But—these were the lawful guardians of the woman. She had married again and her husband had sent for the papers, for they now belonged to

him. Only a most emphatic shake of the head. The woman had trusted the Doctor to care for those papers—she only should receive them.

The group of men went away, only to return in a few days with a written order from the official in the country that these men were the relatives of the former Widow Yang and according to Chinese law had the right to demand the custody of the deeds now in the possession of the "Little Doctor." The latter was requested to deliver them, etc., etc. But the latter refused to consider the request. She herself had no desire to keep the papers. They were nothing to her. But this woman had come unasked to her home and placed the papers in her keeping. They should remain where they were until the woman came for them.

Loud and angry were the words that followed! What was China coming to, that a woman could thus defy the courts and the great men of the country! They would resort to force—they would return to the country and gather all the members of the clan—and they were legion—and general assault would be made upon the place where the papers were hidden. A quiet smile and a courteous request of the Doctor that her guests would consider that there was another side to it all, and that all that she required was that they should produce the woman! A simple enough thing! Go back to the country, bring the former Widow Yang with them—this was all! Would they not drink more

tea? They sipped from the cups before them, bowed, and in silence withdrew.

School had opened. The warm, delighted September days were slipping away. Just the ideal month for itinerating, and the younger missionary of the family decided she must be about her work on the district. An extensive trip was planned and soon she was off. Her work carried her through parts of three provinces. After two weeks' journeyings she was returning to the mission station along a very isolated road. It was early morning. She had stayed the night before in a day-school station, and that she might reach home that night had made a start at daylight on the wheelbarrow. The road she was travelling over was a new one to her—the coolies had said that it was a short cut to Kiukiang. They would not go through the customary towns but across country and make a straight line to the Yangtse River and cross in a small boat owned by men they knew. The tired itinerant was glad of anything that meant home a few hours sooner.

The road was bordered on both sides with the rice fields. The grain was now gathered and the busy days were filled with thrashing and preparing the grain for market. By the side of the road a man suddenly left the field where he was at work and as the wheelbarrow of the missionary passed him, he stepped up out of the field, awkwardly leaned over it, and whispered to the startled oc-

cupant of the barrow; "A former student of yours is in that hut over there. She needs your help." Then in a louder voice he apologized for his stupidity in bumping so rudely into the traveller, smiled, crossed the road, disappearing in the opposite direction.

The coolies carrying the bedding and other baggage were far behind. The wheelbarrow coolie had not heard for the squeak of his machine, and the missionary must think and act quickly. The "hut" was almost in front of her. There was a mystery to it all but it must be solved. In the doorway of the hut sat a woman, her hands idle—most unusual for that early hour when breakfast should be in process of preparation.

"Wait a little here," said the missionary to the coolie. "I am thirsty and want to see if I can get some tea. You rest here until I come back;" and suiting the action to the word, the missionary left the wheelbarrow and approached the hut. She saw at once it was "Widow Yang," but not the slightest sign of recognition showed in the face of the woman, nor did the missionary indicate that she on her part had ever seen the woman before. The tea was asked for,—the traveller had made a very early start and did not want to eat for an hour or so, but did very much long for a drink of hot tea. Could she secure such comfort from the woman? The one addressed had already risen at the approach of the missionary and, glancing at a distant field

where a solitary figure was at work, she answered: "Please take a seat. I will go to my sister-in-law's house over there and get some hot water." In a few seconds she had returned this time with eager feet hastening over the uneven ground, and as she poured out a bowl of tea, she said: "I heard you were in the town over there, holding meetings. I watched for you for days. That man who told you is my present husband's brother; he and his wife sympathize with me. He has gone away up the road, so he will not see anything. My sister-in-law tells me to go quickly with you before my husband in the field sees me. After we have gone, she will tell."

And the rising sun, a few minutes later, saw two women instead of one on the wheelbarrow—the coolie giving a grunt of decided disapproval of the increase of his load, but good-naturedly yielding to the bargain, since it meant doubling the wages for the day's work.

In the evening of the same day they arrived at the city of Kiukiang. A shout of joy rang through the house as the weary member of the family returned and all gathered in the guest-room to welcome her. There by her side stood the long-lost once-upon-a-time Widow Yang! One glance into the face told the awful tale of suffering. Other members of the family were barred out and the tired travellers were seated while the servants were told to bring bowls of hot vermicelli and eggs—a

dish so quickly prepared and always refreshing after a long hard trip.

There had been nothing eaten that day—no inn or village had been passed where food could he secured, and as the servant entered with the steaming hot supper and it was placed before the woman, she was told, "Eat quickly now! We will listen to the story afterwards. You have had a hard day—rest yourself with something to eat, now!" The woman rose slightly, bowed with the customary recognition of a courtesy shown her, then took her seat in front of the table and waited. The head was gently bowed and for a full minute remained so. Then it was lifted, she smiled, and—the missionary quickly stepped to her side with joy in her face! It must be that she had grasped more of the Christian's faith than had been realized! Only three short months had she been in the school. They were months of bewilderment to a large extent, and little had it been realized that much of the truth had reached this lonely troubled heart.

"You remembered to give thanks, didn't you? You have learned to pray?" But a quiet, gentle shake of the head and the woman answered;

"No, I don't know how to pray. I don't know what to say. I just remembered that at the happy school we all bowed our heads while some one thanked the Heavenly Father for the rice! I don't remember what was said—I just remembered we did it! And I have never eaten my rice during all

these dreadful times without—just stopping for a minute. I didn't know what to say, but I knew the Father would understand my dumb cry—Will you teach me now, and I will never forget!"

And we knew that the One who reads hearts had watched with yearning love over this sufferer as through the long months she had turned the silent face towards Him whose she truly was and whom she sought in the loneliness of her darkened soul!

They were beautiful days that followed. Back into the school she went for a few weeks, that she might learn more clearly of the new life in Christ Jesus, and that she might understand the Father's love. The forced marriage had ended far better than could have been imagined. The woman's pitiful suffering had moved the heart of the man she had married, for he too had been a tool in the hands of the Great-Uncle and deeply regretted the part he was persuaded to play. He had been truly kind to the woman and she felt, now that the situation was as it was, she should accept the life that was thrust upon her. To the court in the city of Kiukiang she went, where with sympathizing friends she told her story and the precious deeds were once more legally stamped and *placed in her hands.* Her husband was sent for and came to take her home again, staying for a few days in the city and learning from the Christians of the true God, determined that he too, with his wife, would lead a Christian life. With hearts overflowing with gratitude for

the happy ending of the months of sorrow and suspense, we saw them going down the narrow street of the city, calling back to us, "Tsai huei!" ("We will meet again!")

V

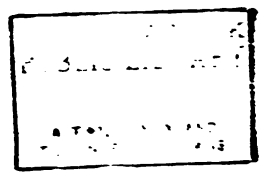
YUNG SEO'S TUITION FEE

IT WAS registration day at Knowles Training School. The Principal of the school was busy with the interviewing of applicants, the registering of old students, the assignment of rooms and desks, and answering many questions brought to her by the Chinese teachers as they hurried in and out in all the joyful confusion of first-day duties.

The gateman came in, pushed his red-buttoned round hat a little more firmly on his head, for men keep their hats on in the house in China, and awkwardly switching his new long blue cotton gown about him, blurted out: "A new pupil waits to see the Siao Chie. She is at the gate, may she come in?" Special interest seemed to be centred about this new arrival, and the busy missionary looked up to say, "Yes, show her in here."

The door opened a few minutes later and in stepped one of the Chinese teachers followed by a rosy-cheeked country girl, large and robust, with big black eyes that were taking in everything in the room, after having given a most friendly smile, that encircled her whole face, to the missionary seated at her desk. The teacher in compliance with the

Yung Seo



invitation to "Be seated," sat at a respectful distance, and the young girl withdrew a few steps and took her place just behind his chair, refusing to sit in the presence of a teacher and the foreigner.

After a few words of solicitation as to the health of the missionary and her relatives in America and her friends generally, the teacher drew attention to the immediate subject in hand by saying, "This is my stupid sister. She is just in from the country home. I sent for her as I want her to study in this school. She has never been outside of the village before and she will need much patience on the part of the Siao Chie. I will pay for her tuition." After some further conversation on the question of classes, and uniform—which latter was most essential, for the young woman in question had arrived in red trousers and a bright green *qua-tz* (coat or upper garment) and blue apron—the young lady, who was just sixteen, was entered as a student and the brother left her in her new, strange surroundings.

Time went on, and Yung Seo became a very happy member of the family. She became intensely interested in the study of the Bible and developed marked ability for telling with vivid accuracy the stories of the men and women of faith in the patriarchal age. We rejoiced when the glad day came that Yung Seo witnessed for the first time to her own faith in Jesus Christ as her Saviour, and we thought with joy of the time when

this young woman would be another to tell her people of her Lord and Master.

One morning after chapel service, Yung Seo and her brother came together to the Principal's room and a dark cloud rested on the face of the teacher while Yung Seo's great eyes showed signs of recent weeping. The brother had come to protest against the recent conversion of his sister to Christianity. "We are all Confucius worshippers. For many generations our clan has been known for faithful adherence to the religion of our forefathers. I brought my sister to school because I believe the time has come for women in our country to share through education the blessings the women of other nations enjoy, and I wanted my sister to have this great blessing. But my honoured father, my people back in the country, will reproach me bitterly if I permit this little sister to renounce the religion of our people. I have talked with her this morning and told her that she may choose between giving up this foolish notion of accepting the Jesus doctrine or leaving school. I cannot use my money to educate her to a faith that will separate her from the family."

Eager words of protestation came from the girl. She pleaded that the opportunity that was now hers might continue and that her life would in the future prove her desire to *help* her own, not to alienate her from them. But her tears and pleadings were in vain, as were the arguments of the missionary, and

finally the teacher withdrew, saying he would wait outside for the girl to gather her things together and then, dismissing himself from the employment of the school, would conduct his sister to the safety of her own home.

As the door closed on the irate young man, Yung Seo drew near to her friend the missionary, and bursting into wild crying begged that a way might be found to save her from the fate of abandonment to the narrow life in the village! It was so hard, after having a taste of heaven, to have the doors shut again and find herself without once more. We reminded her then of her newly found faith and of the Friend who would go with her, and kneeling in prayer, the girl between her sobs of grief and disappointment, pleaded for courage to face the persecution that awaited her and asked most earnestly that the way might yet be opened for her to return.

As a last request, Yung Seo turned back to plead that she might take with her such books as during the few months that she had been in school had been used, and of course her precious Bible was taken along. We went to the gate to see the disappointed girl leave, and we thought within our own heart that Yung Seo was lost to us. Her home was across the Yangtse River, some miles in the interior.

All of that day the wheebarrows carrying the brother and sister back to the old homestead

squeaked along the country roads and nightfall found them just entering the village. A crowd gathered at once at the door of Yung Seo's home, for in China "your business is my business, and my business is everybody's business." There is little privacy and rarely so where there is trouble or disgrace. The heart finds comfort only in telling it all to the largest crowd of sympathizers possible, and so as the young girl with downcast eyes stepped off the wheelbarrow and the brother with long strides came slowly forward, the family and neighbours showed no lack of curiosity as to the cause of the return of the schoolgirl. Her going had not been without excitement and, to tell the truth, much trepidation on the part of the older members of the community. For a girl to attempt to study was a serious enough undertaking, but that this undertaking should be in a school of the dreaded foreigner was certainly a hazardous venture. And now she had returned—and in tears! "Had the foreigner tried to kill her?" "Had she been poisoned?" "Had she eaten too much bitterness?" "Why had both she and the brother returned so unexpectedly?"

In answer to all these queries, and the excited poking of the girl by the women folks into some inclination to speak, the brother cleared his throat, took the offered bench that had been placed for him under the spreading tallow tree that shaded the entrance to the farmhouse, and commenced. The

girl had been brought back by force because she had most stupidly accepted the religion of the foreigner. True, it was a religion with excellent morals—there was no evil connected with it—but its acceptance meant the refusal to worship the ancestors and a denial of many of the teachings of the great teacher Confucius, and the brother, feeling he owed it to the feelings of filial piety within him, had boldly denounced his sister's action and brought the girl back to the shelter of home!

There was a pause, then an avalanche of questions, exclamations, abuse, reproaches, nudgings, disgusted glances, while the inevitable "I told you so!" found in every tongue the world over when there is nothing else to say, filled the air! And "I told you so's," in Chinese, *do* fill the air! The reproach of the white-haired old father was the hardest of all for Yung Seo to bear. When it came to this—for she was the best-loved of the old man's heart—she felt she must defend herself. Lifting her head for the first time, she said, "It is all true, father, all that brother has said. I have been studying the religion of the foreigner, the Jesus religion, and I have found it good. I cannot help believing it, because it has entered my heart, and I cannot take it out again, even to please brother! But, father, the school is a wonderful place! It is not only that I have learned the true religion there, but in the short time since I left you I've learned many other things. Wait!" and running to the little red-

painted trunk that stood by the side of the road where the wheelbarrow man had deposited it, Yung Seo opened it and brought out her books, slate and pencil, writing book with pen and other school treasures. All followed her eagerly as she entered the little home and spread these trophies on the table.

"Father," began the girl with eager voice and trembling hands, "in these few months I have learned to read. Listen!" and she took her Chinese reader in hand, opening to the large characters and commenced reading. The family and friends crowded and jostled against each other, some standing on the benches, others fairly fighting their way to the centre of things that they might both hear and see. A girl able to read! It was unheard of in that place. Never before had any of them seen such a rare creature, though history told of the favoured few—favoured by the gods, —who had been among the scholars of the land. And Yung Seo read on amid the "Ah's!" and "Yiao Si lios" ("I want to die"!) of the onlooking relatives. Then she calmly put down her book and said, "And the school has taught me more than this! I can write characters!" And she called for water, made the ink on the slate slab used for that purpose, and, taking her pen, wrote (it is true with difficulty) some of the well-practiced characters. This paper was duly admired while neighbours were congratulating the old man on the

possession of such a brilliant daughter! And Yung Seo waited until this achievement had been well digested by the crowd, when she took in her hands something that no one there had ever seen before—a slate and slate pencil. The use of these she explained, then proceeded to tell what the strange arithmetical figures stood for and their use,—so much more simple and useful than the abacus! She wrote the figures, she added and subtracted and then called on those present among the farmers to give her some figuring to do. It was the most exciting hour that village had known for many a day.

And as the young girl with flushed cheeks and eager eyes laid down the slate in triumph, she said very softly, "And I have one more result of my months at school for you. I want to sing one of our songs." And softly, timidly raising her voice, she sang the simple song that has won hearts in thousands of heathen villages this tired world over, "O how I love Jesus, because He first loved me!"

As the young voice ceased, wild shouting took place, everybody wanting to talk at once and they did just as they wanted to do! But this time the reproaches were not aimed at the schoolgirl, but turned upon the brother, who had slipped slowly back into an unseen corner, for the girl had had the centre of the stage of action. "You brought this girl away from that school? You refuse to help her to develop such talents?" And to the old father, "Are you going to let this daughter with

such ability be cut off from education! Oh, that we had such marvelous brilliancy in our poor homes! No such honours are ours! Why, you are certainly stupid if you fail to give education to this child. She will some day become a great woman and *support the whole family!"*

Thus did the neighbours upbraid the old father and until night came on, which always scatters crowds in China, the people lingered to express their feelings. And late that night, after the girl had finished the evening work with her mother, and had taken a stool to sit outside in the cool of the evening and think with longing heart of the school-girls gathered for study in the loved assembly room at the Training School, the old white-haired father came out. The girl, true to her natural instinct and training, rose to give her seat to the old man while she stood silently by his side.

An awkward pause ensued, then Yung Seo's father spoke. "Child," he began, "it is a great mistake that your brother has made. His intentions were good, but this time it is an error. I do not know how it can be undone. It is true that our family loses face by your withdrawal from the religion of our fathers, but you will in course of time get over this, I trust. But we have also as a family lost face so completely before this foreign teacher at the school, that I dare not think of sending you back. I cannot ask her to take you. It is a great pity! That a blessing like this one

should be thrown away is a cause for deep regret, but what can be done now? I have no money to pay for you, even if we dared to presume to send you back, and your brother says he will not help us. O but it is a pity, a pity!"

With great restraint on her part, and eager not to show too much the sense of triumph that had seized possession of her heart, Yung Seo with characteristic matter-of-factness replied, "Well, it might be if we *ko-teoed,* the foreigner would forgive the insulting action of my brother, and take me back. Yes," hesitatingly, "I think I can say that she would overlook it."

"But, child," went on the old man, "what about your tuition? I tell you, I haven't even five strings of cash in money. All we have to live on is just what comes off the farm from day to day. And now your brother has given up his position; he has no money either, and I must support him and provide his rice." Then a thought seized the active old brain. "Yung Seo," he almost shouted, "there's the family pig! It's a good-sized one! We could perhaps live on half of it! *Do you think the foreign teacher would be willing to take you for half the pig?"*

The girl's reserve was no longer possible—her joy was complete, and well she knew the heart of the praying missionary and her desire to help this spiritual child of hers back to the blessings of the schoolroom! With delighted, eager voice she

spoke reassuringly to the father, "Yes, father, I am sure the teacher will take the pig! It is a generous offer on your part. The school has meant so much to me and you will not regret making this sacrifice for your stupid child. She will strive to repay you some day!"

Two days later, in the middle of a very busy morning of class work, the schoolroom door was suddenly opened and a laughing young woman rushed in, as fresh as the day itself, forgetting rules and regulations and shouting excitedly as she hurried up the aisle "Shang ti ting o-men-tih tao kao!" ("The Lord has heard our prayer!") It was Yung Seo, back again, red trunk and all, and such rejoicing as there was in the Training School! Lessons were laid aside, period gongs forgot to sound, while we all listened to the wonderful story of answered prayer.

Some months passed by and one day the gateman made another trip to the room of the Principal, and again interrupted, but this time with a broadening smile spreading over his entire countenance as he informed us that there were two men waiting at the gate, asking to see us. We said, "Well, Lao Wang, show them in." With another twitch at the red-buttoned hat and another switching of the long, important, blue gown, the gateman answered apologetically: "It isn't very convenient for them to come in. Will the Siao Chie please come to the gate?" And something in the manner of this

faithful one of years' acquaintance warned us that it *was* best for us to go out without further urging! At the entrance to the grounds, resting under the trees, were two men, who instantly arose as we approached and lifted a long bamboo pole to their shoulders, on which we saw the half body of a huge pig suspended! For an instant we could not imagine what it meant—then the explanation from the smiling men told us—it was Yung Seo's tuition!

At first we wanted to laugh—it did look so funny, and the thought of its meaning—but the earnest, simple message was given with such seriousness and words of courtesy and appreciation of the help given the girl of the household, that we found ourself thanking the men and asking them to "drink tea" before returning on the long journey to the country. And we thought, too, of the sacrifice involved and the willingness on the part of the family away back there in the mud hut, to deny themselves the only meat of the year that their daughter might have the chance that some other girls were having! No, we did not send it back! We did not say, though we felt inclined to do so, that we should not let the sacrifice be made. We took the half pig, knowing that the things in life that cost us something are the most appreciated and that every young woman who thus helped herself would be developing self-respect—one of the biggest assets of life.

Several years passed by. Yung Seo was now within two years of graduation. Then came the Chinese Revolution and with it the temporary closing of the Training School. The father sent for the girl, saying in the accompanying letter, "We, your parents, think the time has now come when you should marry. The betrothal has long ago taken place. Our country is unsettled and it may be years before your school is reopened. Meantime, the hair of our heads is growing whiter and the steps of your parents more feeble. We want to see you safely in the home of your husband. All things are in readiness. The wedding gown is waiting, the gifts from the bridegroom are here. Come to us, our daughter, and fulfil this act of filial piety to your parents!"

The missionary was not at home, and Yung Seo, after reading the letter, flew for refuge to the friend of many a troubled heart in China, the "Little Doctor" over the way! And good, sensible advice came as usual from that quarter. "Of course," said Dr. Stone, "it is your duty to obey your father. He has been most generous in giving you these years of study. Your school work is interrupted—go and obey him and live such a life among your people as will win their hearts to our religion and its teachings—then when war is over and school reopens, ask that you may return to complete your studies." Yung Seo thought for a moment, then, in her impulsive but decisive way, said, "All

right, I will obey; but I cannot have a heathen ceremony. I must have God's blessing upon me in this important step in my life. There is no preacher in that part of the country—Dr. Stone, will you come and marry me?" But to this the "Little Doctor" laughingly shook her head as she said, "That is one thing I cannot do—but, Yung Seo, you go and get ready and send a messenger to tell me the day and I'll promise to come and bring a preacher with me!"

The wedding day arrived—or the day preceding it, when the festivities were to commence—and very early in the morning Dr. Stone with a Bible woman and the promised "preacher" started for the scene. Late in the afternoon of a cold, bleak day in December the party entered the little village, and it was not difficult to distinguish which was the home of the bride, for over yonder under the bare trees stood a hut with large red lanterns hanging gloriously in the doorway blown here and there by the wild night wind. They were already lighted and from within the house came the loud voices of the excited family and many of the neighbours. Barking dogs announced to the family that the expected guests had arrived, and soon Dr. Stone and her party were in the seats of honour and tea and cakes and ginger and all the other delights of a Chinese tea party were being offered the guests.

It was arranged that evening—the last one for Yung Seo in the home of her father, that Dr. Stone,

the honoured guest and friend of the girl, should be invited to speak. Just what she was to say, no one could imagine. The event was great enough in itself, that the humble little mud hut should that night entertain the well-known Chinese doctor and that a woman, and that this woman was actually to make a speech of some kind, was enough to awe every one who heard the news and to dispel enough fear from stray evil spirits abroad at night, to bring together every neighbour able to crowd within the limited space.

The evening meal was ended. Over at the far end of the room, directly opposite the entrance to the home, the incense was burning in the little native lamp; the red candles were lighted and smoking in their high holders on either side of the long shelf that held the family gods. Just behind and above all, in the most conspicuous place, could be seen dimly outlined in the dark, smoky room, the ancestral tablet. Overhead, the dust of ages hung low on the cobwebs, like a thin, gauzy black veil to hide the rude timbers that held the little building in place. The floor had been swept to immaculateness, and the table and benches shone from the vigorous rubbing and polishing of the day. A strip of red silk hung over the door that led into the tiny room where the bride was preparing for the great event of the coming day. A lively hum of voices, an occasional cry from one of the many babies in the arms of mothers, the yelping of the

house-dog as he frequently found himself kicked or stepped on, slinking as he did among the feet of the crowd of guests in the room—all represented the life of the place, and then, from the side of the room, came a very happy voice in eager tones congratulating the family upon the event of the morrow.

The "Little Doctor" was speaking! The children were "hushed," or, if they failed to hush were rudely pushed out of the door there to finish the quarrel or howling to their hearts' content. In her hand Dr. Stone held a little Book, which she proceeded to open as she talked. She told of the years Yung Seo had spent in the Christian school, of her splendid efforts to excel in her work and prove worthy of the opportunity given her. "But tomorrow she leaves you all for the home of her husband, and she wants me tonight to tell you why she is to have this Christian pastor perform a ceremony that to you will seem strange." The "Little Doctor" paused, smiled upon her hearers, and then told of the great loving Heavenly Father and His plan for His children. She told of His laws and of His own desire to be a Father to every one who would love and obey Him. And then, turning to her Book, she asked that she might read from the words of this same loving Heavenly Father, and softly, clearly, with slow, steady voice, the speaker read the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, telling, so plainly that the smallest child might understand,

the blessings that God has promised to those who love Him. Then far into the evening the faithful witness told of what it meant to love Him—of the sureness of His promise and that the young girl so soon to leave her father's home to make a new home among her husband's people, wanted to have all the blessings promised.

On the other side of the room sat Yung Seo's father. With eager look on his face, he drank in every word. Could it be that he was wrong and Yung Seo right? Was it true as this woman of his own nation, this doctor known far and wide in the land, who had performed such miracles upon sick people, such as the native doctors failed to help, said, that the Heavenly Father she talked of was the true God? If so, what about *his* household! Should it receive the blessings of this God—or the curse that was likewise promised to fall upon those who refused to obey? Yung Seo herself had risen and gone over, standing by the side of the "Little Doctor," and now she was speaking—her young face aglow with light—the fear of the people gone, and forgetting the part of modesty and shyness to be played by her as the bride of the occasion, she was talking—saying something to him—her old father! The old man jogged his stool a little forward and his eyes eagerly drank in every look on the animated young face. "Father," Yung Seo was saying, "I must speak tonight. You have heard all the evening this wonderful story of God's love. I

am not afraid tomorrow to leave your home for I am taking this God with me. I am sure of the blessings He has, for I have promised to love and obey Him. But O my father," and the young girl left the hand of Dr. Stone that she was holding and, hurrying to her father's side, she pleaded, "I can't leave you to receive the curse of the God I love! I want you, too, to know His blessing. Those idols," pointing to the shelf over the old man's head, "cannot save you! They are made with man's hands! The God I love is so real. He has answered so many of my prayers and now I want you to love the true God! Father, won't you promise me tonight, my last night at home, that you will read of Him and learn of Him, and love Him? Then we shall all have His blessings as He has promised!"

There was a pause. No one for a moment spoke —the ever-ready tongues of the crowd of women gathered were silent and then, with tottering form, Yung Seo's father arose and stretching out his long, bony arms towards his child, he said, "Take them down, Yung Seo. You are right—something tells me this is the true God! Take down the false ones from that shelf!" Startled by the command from her father, but wanting to make sure of the wonderful conversion of the old man, the girl exclaimed eagerly, "Father, you take them down! I'll bring a stepladder—you do it yourself. Come, I will help you." And the ladder was brought and Yung

Seo's strong young arms set it in place in front of the shelf. Then she led the old man to the steps and he climbed up, one, two, three steps. Would his trembling hands dare the desecration? There was a movement in the crowded room and the fearful ones darted quickly towards the entrance. But sentiment in favour of the old man's actions was growing. Encouragement came from many sides of the room, and there close beside him stood the girl of his old heart! "I'll take them,—hand them to me, father," said Yung Seo.

It was done! The shelf was empty save for the burning red candles and the dish of smoking incense, and outside in the rain and dampness, sputtered the last bits of charred wood that for generations had been all that represented a god to the darkened minds of the little home! And holding hands, the "Little Doctor" and Yung Seo and the Bible woman, joined in by the preacher, sang the Doxology.

The next day the Christian ceremony was performed. It was a joyous occasion and many a young girl of the village looking on exclaimed, "Yung Seo doesn't cry! She hasn't cried once! She really looks happy. Who ever before saw a happy bride!" And Yung Seo was a happy bride. She went out from her father's home, knowing she was leaving the old man and his remaining family to serve the same loving God she loved. And she went to her new home, to begin the first day with

telling her husband's people of the love of the Father, the friendship of the Saviour! Years quickly passed. The young husband was led to Jesus by the eager young Christian wife. For two years, Yung Seo taught a little day-school that she opened in the home of her husband, where she led many children of that village to Christ, and where on Sundays she conducted a Christian service for the village people.

One day, accompanied by her husband, she came back to the Training School. The husband had a position on one of the great passenger boats plying the Yangtse River and it was arranged that Yung Seo should finish her course while the husband would gladly pay for her tuition.

It was a day of marvelous triumph when at last graduation dawned! A great joy had come into Yung Seo's life but a few weeks before, when a little daughter was born. Yung Seo had taken her final examinations—the last one completed and safely passed but three days before the little one came. Then when it was told her that God had sent her a little girl, the first eager words as she looked into our faces were, "I am so glad I have a daughter! I want to call her Mary Stone. Oh, I hope she will be a blessing to our poor country, as the "Little Doctor" has been!"

And when we handed the blue-ribboned diploma into the outstretched hand of this young woman who had so marvellously been led of God, we

thought back into the years and thanked Him that "the things that are impossible with man are possible with God." Investment in Yung Seo's tuition had been well worth while!

VI

PAYING FOR ONESELF

THE Chinese pastor stood by the side of the missionary, his small girl by the hand. She was indeed small—even for a Chinese girl. Her long loose trousers came to the ground—they were new and made large enough to last several years of growing. The loose-sleeved gown was also amply large and fell well below the knees. The beautiful, glossy hair was smoothly combed from her forehead and hung in a most respectable braid at the end of which dangled an elaborate black silk tassel—and the tassel was brand-new also! On her head she wore a wonderful cap, setting on her forehead and around her head like an enlarged coronet without any crown in it—and a wide fringe of black silk bordered the cap, falling loosely around the little round face, from which looked out two very bright eyes. On the feet, marvellously large for a girl of eight years, were a beautifully embroidered pair of shoes.

Pastor Shih smiled proudly, as he led the little girl to the desk to register her. Bowing to the busy missionary, he said hastily, "Teacher Howe, I have brought my little girl to you. Mei Yü is now eight

years of age and ought to be studying. I have thought a great deal about her future. Since I have been a Christian I have realized as never before the awful suffering of the women of our country. Then the American woman doctor came here and her work has been such a blessing to the people, and I have been thinking it all over. Here is my little girl—*I want you to make a doctor out of her!*"

And the young, fair-haired missionary looked down at the tiny bit of humanity standing there before her! Mei, Yü? Yes, she knew all there was to know of the little girl. Was she not the first one to ever hold the child in her arms after her birth? And had she not seen this, the first child of the first converts to Christianity in that part of China, growing up in the home of her consecrated parents, studying in the little day-school where her mother was the teacher, and being tenderly reared despite the fact that the heathen neighbours and friends said the vengeance of the gods was being wreaked upon them because they had become Christians—and so this worthless girl had come to them instead of the son!

But here was a new task for the missionary. "Make a doctor out of her!" Who had ever heard of a woman doctor in that great land! Had it not been a difficult enough task to secure the consent of a few parents for their girls to come to school without attempting, even in the wildest of

dreams, the education of a girl for a profession! But Teacher Howe saw that the young father before her had had a great vision and so she, the woman whose own vision had brought her from her far distant home to establish a school for the girls of China, smiled as she took the hand of Mei Yü in her own, and turning to the father said quietly, "All right, Pastor Shih. Leave Mei Yü here and we will see what we can do about it!"

* * * * * * *

A small, frail-looking woman entered the schoolroom. Close upon her was a little girl—a delicate-looking child, with large, frightened black eyes that peered bewilderedly from behind the woman's blue cotton gown, then hid themselves, when noticed, in the folds of the same friendly refuge. The child was dressed in a coarse blue cotton gown —clean but well patched. The trousers were already outgrown and the thin ankles of the girl showed below the blue. A gown, much worn and mended, from the shrunken sleeves of which thin little arms protruded, was made of the same familiar blue. Here, too, the ever glossy hair was combed neatly and braided with a generous supply of coarse black string which fastened it at the end. On the feet, all that represented the one-time childish feet, now cruelly bound and deformed, was a pair of black cotton-cloth shoes.

The woman led the way straight to the desk where the missionary waited to enroll the next new-

comer. There was a wistful look in the eyes of the mother—for such she was—as she stooped low, bowed, burying her roughened-by-work hands in the large flowing sleeves of her gown, and then turning, pulled the reluctant child forward and pleaded that she might enter school. She could not pay anything—in fact, the school had appealed to her because it would save the child's rice and the woman was a widow, with only the work of washing as a means of livelihood. She had heard of the school where girls were being taught—a funny trick indeed, but she thought her child would be safe there and—*would* the missionary take her stupid girl?

And so in the same school the two girls started on their new life. For the little Mei Yü, all was joy and sunshine. Each afternoon saw her taken to her own home, where the mother welcomed her with loving arms, listening to the stories of school life, enquiring carefully into the progress being made with the books, and urging the child to make the most of the opportunity that the kind Heavenly Father had given to her.

But for the other, Kuei Yin, there was no home to turn to when the rest of the children made their way to relatives on the Saturday afternoons. Her mother was too far away and too busy working for the necessities of life to make it possible to see her child very often. The school life was a wonderfully happy one though for the little girl. Plenty

of rice and good vegetables to eat; the large roomy dormitory where each child was lóvingly tucked away in bed and cared for in the most motherly way by Teacher Howe. The long delightful Sundays when there were no lessons to be studied and when all the girls gathered about the missionary and the songs were sung and the Bible stories were told and the verses recited. Best of all Kuei Yin loved the song that told all about being loved—over and over again she would sing the chorus as she ran and played in the garden under the large mulberry trees.

"I am so glad that Jesus loves me!"

Then one never-to-be-forgotten day—such a dreadful day for the happy child!—her mother did come for her and came to take her away. She had only been in school about four months and it was not time for vacation yet, and even if it had been Kuei Yin would have preferred to have stayed with Teacher Howe. The little girl was so glad to see the dear mother again, but somehow her mother did not seem at all pleased to see her. She cried and held her tight in her arms, and it made Kuei Yin want to cry too, though she did not know why. The little girl remembered that Teacher Howe spoke with great emphasis about something to the mother and was urging her not to take the child away, but the mother said over

and over again, "Muh Yiu fah-tz!" ("There is no other way!") And in the end, Kuei Yin's small package of clothes were found and tied in the piece of dark blue muslin that her mother had in her pocket, and then—Teacher Howe drew the little girl to her arms, gave her one long hug, told her to remember what she had learned, looked very sad as she released the child, and Kuei Yin's mother tried to kneel on the stone floor to express her appreciation, but the missionary prevented her from doing so, said a few kindly words, and the mother and child left the school.

Long years passed. Mei Yü had completed her course of study in the mission school, studied with Teacher Howe all kinds of big books, and then one day had sailed away with the same loved mother-teacher to far-away America, where she entered, though but a girl of nineteen, the great medical school where she was to prepare for that task, the vision of which had been given to the dear father as he preached the gospel to his loved people!

And then graduation day came for Mei Yü, a wonderful day when, as secretary of her class, a great class of men and women, she stood upon the platform to receive the diploma so well earned—that precious paper that was to permit her to go back to great China, her own country, there to minister to the suffering, uncared-for women and children of her land. Hardly had the sound of the cheers died away as the little Chinese girl received

her reward for the four years of faithful, heroic work in the strange land, before she was planning to hasten back to begin work! And the next few weeks saw her on her way to China.

Many years had again passed. The hospital had been erected, first but a small dispensary then growing into a great building where thousands of women and suffering little ones were being cared for yearly. White-gowned nurses by the dozen were seen flitting here and there caring for the sick and dying. Patients filled every corner and crevice of the place, not only inside the buildings but in the garden on the beds placed under the spreading trees, for the hospital was all too small for the accommodation of those who sought healing here. In the various parts of the building were the consecrated Bible women who, by the bedside of the patient, in the children's ward, down in the clinic, in the large chapel where attendants and relatives waited for those they had come to visit or had brought to the hospital for treatment,—wherever there was one to whom the "Old Story of Love" could be told, one of His faithful eager messengers was to be found!

In this same chapel, one morning, as the gates to the hospital had been opened, with the motley crowd of pushing, jostling women, old and young, some in tattered garments, feeble with disease and leaning on canes, others younger and alert hastening to make time count and be first at the clinic, was a small creature, bent and shrunken to all ap-

pearance with age. She moaned as the other women pushed against her, and left the broad gravelled path and took her way across the green grass. The chapel was nearly full as she entered, and she stood for a moment shading her small eyes with one rough horny hand, as she tried to see a vacant seat. On the small raised platform at the end of the chapel stood a woman, most motherly in appearance, dressed in a dark gown, her hair fastened under a black velvet cap on the front of which was a large Chinese ornament resembling a huge pearl. She wore glasses, and held a Book in her hand. She wore, most conspicuous of all, the sunniest of smiles that fairly wreathed the round, happy face. Her voice was raised in eager tones, as the people gathered in the room, there to wait their turn to see the great doctor.

The speaker was not slow to see the last newcomer and that she was without a seat. The roomful of women were talking—some were standing up, others were sitting, but gesticulating to friends and neighbours who had accompanied them to the clinic but in the mad rush to get in had become separated from them. Now they were all trying to identify each other and find their bearings. Most of the crowd were good-natured. Shouts of "Come here! I can make room for you!" "Is this the place? I'm scared to death!" were heard. Meantime, the woman who was evidently the master of the situation in the crowded room had left

the platform and was making for the door to reach the trembling, frightened woman who was still standing.

"Come here, I will find a place for you. Have you come a long way? You look very tired. What is your honourable name? Do you want to see the Doctor? Is this your first visit or have you been here before?" And with the eager questioning the two made their way to the front, where a seat was found.

In the course of time the nurse beckoned to the woman who has claimed our attention, but for a moment she was unconscious of the fact that the long waiting time was up and that her "turn" had come. She had spent a wonderful hour listening to the stories that the woman up there on the platform had told. Her thirsty soul drank in every word, but the secret that was within her own heart was not revealed to another—not yet!

"You—yes, you may come now—this way;" and the white gowned nurse gently led the woman through the door to a smaller room beyond. "In there—the Doctor is there. She will see you now."

The woman entered painfully, limping and walking with great difficulty, for the poor cramped limbs so cruelly bent and twisted found it almost impossible to carry their owner after the hour's wait. She stood just inside the door and looked. There at a small table, on which were various strange-looking objects, sat a very happy-faced woman.

Young? Yes, most assuredly—no one would have said she was more than a young woman. She was dressed in spotless white—not the ordinary, greyish white so often used for mourning, but pure white—skirt and gown, the sleeves of the latter turned back just a little for comfort and ease for the task.

In her heavy dark hair was a blood-red rose, and with an eager smile she greeted the woman. The patient, however, did not advance, but stood as though spellbound—bent, shrunken, pale, trembling in every limb; then she asked in a slow even voice as one awakening from a dream, "Dr. Stone? Is it Dr. Stone—the great Dr. Stone?" The physician rose and came quickly to the hesitating figure, put her arm gently about her and drew her forward to the chair that was set close to the other side of the table, and with a merry laugh that dispelled any thought of an uncanny, unhuman halo, she said, "Yes, I am the Doctor. You wanted to see me about yourself? Oh, how dreadfully crippled you are!" But even the unaccustomed tone of kindness and sympathy failed to rouse the woman. She allowed herself to be gently pushed into the chair and as the Doctor took her own seat, again the long piercing look into the other's face, and again the words: "So you are Dr. Stone! Shih Mei Yü!"

"Come," quietly said the doctor, "tell me about yourself! I want to help you if I can!"

"You don't know me, Doctor—of course you could not be expected to know me. I know all

about you, though. And now I am really here. May I tell you my story?"

It was a busy hour in the morning, but with great patience the one little woman who was the only doctor on a great district of five millions of people, leaning forward and with bated breath, listened to the heart-breaking story as it was told to her.

It was the story of Kuei Yin. She had left the bright schoolroom, its door of opportunity closed to her forever, and despite all the pleadings of her mother, she had been taken to the "Po Wu"—the home of her future mother-in-law, for she had been betrothed in infancy. True, her mother had hoped, when the betrothal took place, that she could keep the child until the marriageable age, but the times were hard and she was so desperately poor, not enough rice for herself and the child since her man went away to the Great Unknown. By placing the girl in the boarding-school of the foreigner, Kuei Yin's mother had thus hoped to secure for the girl education and perhaps a chance for her to remain home longer. But the family into which her child had been betrothed had sent one messenger after another, demanding that the girl be sent to them. She was now nearly eight years old, and it was time she should begin her training that would fit her to become the wife of the loved boy in the family.

Kuei Yin could never forget the last night at

home. All through the long hours, she lay in bed with her mother, held close to that dear heart, and sobbed out her fear and heartbreak. Over and over again the little girl would moan, "O my mother, don't send me away from you! Please don't send me away!" And the weeping mother would hold the child still closer as she explained over and over again, "Girl, my girl, my own baby girl! How can I help it! Is there anything else in life for a girl? Must you not go to the home of the brother who must be your husband some day? Can a woman do else but marry? Is there any hope or happiness for you, my child, unless the gods send to you a son in the years to come to love and worship at your husband's grave?"

It was so little understood by the frightened child and less could she fathom the mystery of her mother's great love yet willingness to send her from her, when the next day the clumsy wheelbarrow came, pushed by a big smiling man who paid no attention to the cries of the little girl as her small box of red, with her few garments in it, was tied with ropes to one side of the wheelbarrow and a quilt covered with dark-blue figured cloth was fastened to the other side—her seat for the long journey into the next province.

With one despairing wail as she was led out from the mud hut that had been home, Kuei Yin threw herself upon the ground and sobbed, "Let me die! I want to die! O mother, don't send me away!"

But the next thing she knew she was lifted in strong arms and placed on the waiting seat and the wheelbarrow started on its long, squeaky way!

The years that followed were not unusual. One in a large family of farmer's folk, Kuei Yin became as one of them. She was at the call of the boy whom she called "Brother." They played together, they worked together—often wandering off into the woodlands to gather firewood for the family, and if the small girl was fortunate enough not to have to carry "Brother" home on her back, because he was too "tired" to walk himself, she was a happy child.

The wedding day came at last. There was no love there. The choice had been made for them by their families—betrothal in that day was as sacred as marriage, and must be carried out. Kuei Yin continued to live on in the same way as before her marriage as far as the home was concerned and the work that must be done. The years passed—several of them, and the girl's face became more and more sad. The family treated her with disdain. She must indeed have been a great sinner in her previous state of existence, for the gods were punishing her and no son had yet been given her. Her husband declared one day that he did not know why he should be punished for the sins of the woman—he did not intend to endure the scorn of his friends much longer. And Kuei Yin heard and trembled.

Shortly after this, one evening after her husband had been absent from home for a time, he called her from the evening work she was engaged in out in front of the farmhouse and in a very indifferent tone of voice said: "I have just come back from the town yonder—forty *li* away. I have sold you to a friend of mine there. You can get your things together tonight—I will take you there in the morning!"

And the next day soon after sunrise, saw the man starting off free hand down the winding footpath that led through the rice fields to the distant town. Behind him followed the woman, all she could call her own tied in a little bundle and swinging from her hand. With head bent, she followed in silence!

When she reached the hut of the man to whom she had been sold, she stood while the two men bargained. The second man did not have the money ready—no, not even the small part of it that he had promised to pay on delivery of goods. But he was cheerful about it. He looked the woman over well, seemed pleased with his bargain, and said that she had plenty of work waiting for her in the fields of a friend of his, where he had already hired her out and she would soon be able to *earn her own sale price!*

Not a sound from the silent figure. It was not worth while! She was cursed by the gods—she had no son—there was no honour for her, no

redress for this sin! And the next day she went into the rice fields, working in the deep water, planting the young sprigs of rice as she was told.

Here again the years rolled on. Oh, the sin of the past! Oh, the blackness of the present! Oh, the hopelessness of the future! Still no son was born in answer to her piteous cry and forgotten she was by the gods!

Again she was told one day that it was useless for her husband to show more sympathy for her. She had cursed his life. He was a laughing-stock among his friends—his "face" was indeed lost among his people. He was sorry for the woman, but that did not give him the heir he wanted. That would not open the door into paradise for his soul! He must not be disgraced—his family refused longer to endure the insult. Perhaps she would be happier elsewhere—anyway, he had found another home for her—if she would be ready, well, whenever she could wash her things, he would send for the man who would take her to his home, for he, her husband, had sold her for a fair price. The husband-to-be, though, was still poorer than this one—but she was a good worker in the fields—she had always provided for her husband by her work, and she would soon be able to earn the money for her sale!

And into the blackest gloom silently walked the woman. Ah, yes, a woman! A woman with a

woman's heart, capable of such suffering as any woman knows, and she suffered alone and in silence!

Somehow the years went by. How the time was spent, only the One who never forgets, though His heart of boundless love may break, saw. But He did see and He said, "It is enough!"

One day the woman found herself a widow. A childless widow! No one claimed her! The small hut was not hers, and from the depths of despair and fleeing the state of mere existence that had been her lot these many years, she sped away.

Days of travel on foot, on the poor, pain-twisted feet, limbs bent and worn with the disease that came from the years of toil in the damp fields, and she found herself back in the great city where as a child she had lived and gone to school.

She looked again long into the Doctor's face. That face had been drawn with pain of sympathy and she reached now for the handkerchief, wiped away the tears, and then putting her hand on that of the teller of the story, she said,

"Oh, you are to be pitied! It is so dreadful! But tell me, *how did you live through it all!* How could you endure it—you a woman!"

Then for one moment the woman straightened up, clasping her hands together in a tight grip, and a rare smile passed over the face. Oh, that face! One to look into it would have thought she was

aged and worn with the weight of years yet she was still but a young woman. And she said in answer to the question: "How did I live through it? Well, I'll tell you. Way back in those days when I was a little schoolgirl, in those beautiful days that seem like heaven now, there was a song they taught us to sing. I can only remember one bit of it, just a few words—*'I am so glad that Jesus loves me!'* I have forgotten everything else. I don't know who 'Jesus' is. I don't remember anything I heard there, but all through the years, when I wanted to die, when I thought I could not live, when no one cared, I remembered and sang those words—no, I said them—'I am so glad that Jesus loves me!' and I knew that, somewhere, there was One who loved me! *That* is how I have lived through it!"

Tenderly, lovingly the sufferer was cared for in that blessed hospital where the thousands of weary have found rest and love and care! The treatment, the care, the good food, best of all, the love showered upon the hungry heart, resulted in the comparative restoration of the woman. She learned more of the One who loves, and, after recovery, studied His word for several years, and then with a heart that had suffered and endured and knew how to sympathize with the women of that land as no happy American missionary can ever understand or know, she went out into the country, telling the story of His love, of His watch-

ful care, of His sympathy, leading hundreds of her sisters suffering as she once did, but without a knowledge of the Christ, to find in Him the Friend of Friends.

VII

FROM HUT TO UNIVERSITY

THE Annual Conference was in session. All the long day deliberations had been going on, most of them tantalizingly deliberate! The handful of missionaries and the small company of Chinese pastors and workers had thrashed out one problem after another, and the two secretaries, English and Chinese, had faithfully interpreted back and forth for the sake of those not understanding both languages. We had had two or three days of this, and to the new missionary especially all the novelty of the situation had long since worn away and the irksome stage had been reached when there was a break in the program by the announcement that that evening there would be a concert given at the Girls' School and "all were invited." Now, a concert may be spurned at will at home, but never in Central China for there may not be another before furlough or, at the earliest, the next annual visit of the Bishop!

We went that evening, every one of us, and we went early and stayed late. It was a rare treat for all,—for the missionaries old and new,—the former to enjoy the fruit of their labours, the new

to catch a vision of what mighty possibilities lay before their humble efforts in the days to come! And the Chinese friends were all there too—the pastors—those splendid men of faith and courage, living far in the interior, where often they heard only their own voices in public exortation and sermon year in and year out; those Bible women or Evangelists coming as delegates from the far inland stations where every woman and child in the place looked to them as friend and adviser in time of need, and the day-school teachers, often dear young things just out of the schools and sent to open a school for girls, where the teacher herself happens to be the only individual within the walls who can read and write and is therefore the greatest woman in the city!

It was a wonderful program, composed of songs by the girls from Kindergarten age to High School, recitations mostly in Chinese but with enough English to "show off" well and to delight the ears of those who as yet get very little out of the honourable language of that most honourable country. There were all sorts of interesting features, but the climax came at the end of the evening when the High School girls sang the Hallelujah Chorus from the "Messiah." We had—all of us—listened to that matchless chorus as it had been sung by hundreds of voices in the homeland. We had some of us heard it at Christmas time in the great music halls of New York, but never had it filled and

thrilled our hearts as it did that night in the mission school of Central China, as the hallelujahs rolled from the throats of those young Chinese girls—most of them as we learned afterwards being the one-time not wanted baby girls that the missionary had taken in and cared for during the years. The leader that night was one of those orphan girls, now a young woman graduate of the school and on the teaching staff. She sang with all her soul, her dark eyes shining, her cheeks flushed, and with an abandon that attracted every onlooker.

It so happened that one of the many visiting young preachers present that night was looking for a wife and we were not at all surprised when a few months after that concert we heard it announced in mission circles that there was to be a wedding at the next session of Conference. And so it was, and the good Bishop gave the young pastor and his newly-wed wife their first appointment.

About a week after Conference had adjourned, news reached us that Pastor and Mrs. Wang were to pass through our city *en route* for their new charge. We gave a hearty welcome, and a day or two later saw the bride and groom start off for a seven-days' trip into the interior, to a far-distant city. It was their honeymoon, and taken on the wheelbarrow! There were parts of three provinces to pass through, rice-field country and high mountains, and no railroads or even carriage roads—just the winding footpath for the wheelbarrow, but no

happier hearts were on the road those days than the young preacher and his bride!

Far into the interior of Anhwei Province they made their way, to a large walled city where there was no permanent mission work established—the people occasionally hearing the Gospel from an itinerating preacher.

Some six months later, Pastor Wang wrote asking if we would not make the trip to the city of Tai Hu, to look over the small work established and plan for larger things. And we went—went as he did, on the wheelbarrow for seven days, but not on *our* honeymoon! It was a very cold, rainy night when we approached the great city. It had been a week of rain, but occasional sunshine had unfolded to us the most wonderful country. After the plains had been passed, there were the mountains and they were covered often with groves of the most glorious pine trees, the fragrance filling the air and making the trip one joy. There had been many delays though, because of frequent stoppings to dry our wet clothing. One evening, just at twilight, we reached the summit of the last high hill to be crossed, and as the coolies rested from the terrible effort they pointed away off there in the distance beyond a vast and level plain, and informed us that that was the city of Tai Hu, and that unless we struck too much mud down there, we ought to get across the expanse and reach the city wall by nine o'clock. We wondered what would happen

to us if there was no way of getting a message inside that wall to our waiting friends, for the city gates were sure to be locked at that late hour. Our fears were groundless, however, for, as we approached, the gates were partly ajar and a servant was waiting with cards from Pastor Wang to ask for our entrance. The Pastor had been watching all day, but had gone home for a few minutes and we arrived in his absence.

Our wheelbarrow gave the final squeak for that trip as it halted at the closed door of a house at the far end of the business street of the city. It seemed to our very weary selves as though that street were interminable, but at last we stopped, and with great effort we dragged our cramped bodies from our more cramped position and tried to stand erect while waiting for the door to be opened. Rain was oozing from our garments—Chinese clothes—and our very hair was dropping rain.

In a moment the door was opened, and a glad cry from both Pastor and Mrs. Wang and we heard the first words in English for a week! We were quickly drawn into the little home that served as chapel, home and school for the boys, and soon all our weariness was forgotten as we exchanged our damp clothing for warm and dry apparel, and our wet shoes for woollen slippers. Supper was soon served—hot rice and vegetables deliciously cooked Chinese style, which by the way is the best in the world—and under the table a big bronze brazier

of glowing coals was placed, to keep our feet warm from the damp earthen floor.

And then we talked of the work, what had been done and what might be done! Pastor Wang was most enthusiastic. He had found but one Christian in the city, a man of very humble home, living in a little hut, but a man who was a keen scholar and remarkable in many ways for his large vision. He had always been a most devoted Confucian scholar but had gone to hear an itinerating preacher in one of his visits to that city, had secured a copy of the Bible, and had been converted to Christianity through its reading. This one Christian scholar had opened the door for Pastor Wang's entrance into many of the best homes of the city, where his message had created deep interest. In fact, a number of the scholars of the city were meeting regularly in the evenings, with Pastor Wang, to read the Bible. So great had become the interest that a small school for boys had been started and now a demand for a girls' school had arisen, and it was to talk over the possibility of establishing this school that the missionary had been summoned.

Late into the night the talk went on, then Mrs. Wang decided the guests should be put to bed—and smilingly invited the missionary and her travelling companion to go to the little room designated as the "Pastor's study." It was a tiny place, but a home-made table or desk was there, and some pictures taken from out-of-date calendars, nicely

mounted, were hung upon the wall, while a shelf about two feet long held all of the books both English and Chinese belonging to the young pastor's "library." The little wife smiled as we admired the room and as we said, "How nicely you have fixed it up—just like the missionary's study, isn't it?"—answered, "Yes, I always noticed when I was a schoolgirl that every missionary had this kind of a room, and I wanted my husband to have one too!"

Our folding camp-beds that we had brought with us had been opened and our bedding spread upon them. As we said good-night to our little hostess, she gave one uncertain look at the roof over us—just the tiled roof with no inner ceiling, and said dubiously, "I hope you will not be disturbed by the rain." We answered, "Nothing can keep us awake tonight. We are so tired and this is a lovely room." But we had never seen rain before in our lives until that night—real rain, we mean, and rain in China! We not only saw it and heard it, but we felt it! We had just fallen to sleep—so it seemed—when we were conscious of being wet—very wet! That Chinese rain was making its way to us through every crack between every tile over our heads. Our faces were drenched—the bedding was drenched, and for a moment we were too tired to care and decided to just *let it rain!* Not so with the hostess, for she had heard our exclamations and was in there, a red lantern

in hand, and our bedding was exchanged for dry while we held a huge oiled paper umbrella over the bed and hostess. "Now," said Mrs. Wang, "get in, Siao Chie, and cover up, quick. I'll put this umbrella over you—nothing can come through *this!*" And we slept the rest of that night and two nights afterwards under the umbrella!

It was decided to establish a girls' school at once. There were none in the city, and many were asking for one since Mrs. Wang had come and it had been seen what a Chinese woman could do if given a chance to study. Mrs. Wang, of course, was to be the teacher of all but the Chinese classics, and a man teacher was secured for this work.

Not far from the little mission house lived Teacher Wang. It was a very tiny house of mud bricks dried in the sun, but in it was a most interesting family. Teacher Wang was not only a scholar of unusual literary knowledge, but he had also studied something of medicine as the Chinese knew it and had practised the use of herbs as remedies and was often addressed as "Doctor Wang." He had startled the entire city when he accepted Christianity. Long and bitter had been the struggle after the truth. He had opposed the entrance of the itinerant Christian most vigorously at first and would not allow any mention of that religion at home, even by way of discussion. Then came the determination to seek for himself the truth, and with this, the purchase of a Bible, and

as beforehand stated, conversion followed. When the news was abroad that a school for girls was to be started, again Teacher Wang's spirit was tested. In the home were three children. The oldest was the loved son who had come to gladden their hearts in the long-ago days when the gods were worshipped, and he was considered to have been sent as a reward of faithful worship. But the lad was now a growing boy, and next came Yang Hsun, the only daughter and the joy of her father's heart. She was her father's constant companion and he was her best comrade. When she was very tiny, he had amused himself long evenings by teaching her the Chinese characters. Though tradition had it that a girl was "soulless and mindless," yet the proud father had determined that in as far as his child was concerned she should be taught the same as her brothers—for a younger boy was toddling around the tiny home now.

Only a few houses away up the street lived Yang Hsun's cousin, a girl a few years older than herself. Yang Hsun herself was now thirteen years old—a tiny mite of a girl, slight in figure, with twinkling black eyes and a positive little nose freely besprinkled with freckles. Her rosy cheeks had a few samples of the same brown spots with very pronounced dimples and the small mouth was so often pursed for asking of her father the things she wanted to know, that one could almost see the question mark appearing as with eager face she

waited in the presence of the caller. Now this cousin was Yang Hsun's boon companion. In the hot days of summer they were often invited to the home of the old grandmother, who lived outside of the city on a little rice farm. It was the height of the girls' ambition to be able to spend a few weeks together here in the old homestead, and many were the happy times thus passed. But now it was winter and the house was dark and dull and it became a stupid and most uninteresting time even for the vivacious little girl, when her father called her to the pile of classics books without one illustration, just pages of the characters that must be recognized and committed to memory or the task of writing from the copies that her father set for her. No wonder when the cousin rushed in one morning, her wooden rain shoes clattering on the earthen floor and the oiled umbrella dripping rivulets of water in her wake, and the announcement was made: "A school! A school for girls in the new mission chapel! I want to go and I may go if you may!" that a wild shriek of delight came from the tiny girl curled up in a big chair in the guest-room, where she was as usual possessed by a book. Then the teasing commenced, but the wise mother referred it all to the father. He was out at that moment in attendance on one of his many patients, and Yang Hsun must wait for his return. The two girls with arms about each other planned all the wonderful things they would do if

only they could escape from the tedious winter indoors!

Night came on and the older girl hastened home. Late that evening, Teacher Wang returned, tired and worn from the hard day of tramping about the city. The sick were everywhere. Disease was doing its worst, and somehow the discouraged man felt these days since his soul had been awakened to the better things of life and he had learned of the Great Physician, that his own meagre knowledge of how to help suffering ones, was all too trifling. He looked that night at his splendid son now making rapid strides in his work at the government school. Soon he must take him from there to learn a trade, for the mere pittance that came to the palm of his father was not enough to feed the growing children. Teacher Wang himself was not well. Despite all he could do, that cough persisted and these wet days—well, things would look dark indeed were it not for the knowledge that there was the Heavenly Father whose ear was ever open to the cry of His children. And there was his Yang Hsun. How he loved her! How he wanted that she should have a chance in the world—such a chance as that wonderful little woman Pastor Wang's wife had had—that she might perhaps raise her voice to plead for the true religion and all that it taught. He had tried faithfully to teach his family about God, but the wife cared little to hear and the children failed to grasp it.

But tonight there was something new to hear—a new proposition from Yang Hsun. To be sure, she was always full of schemes, but this time there was no laughing of the child out of her request. "A school for girls—to be opened tomorrow at the new mission house. Just for girls; the boys—oh, they would be there, but in another room entirely. It was quite respectable—several officials' girls were going—and Mrs. Wang was to be the teacher—arithmetic, English, music, marching—oh, so many wonderful things! And there could be no possible objection, for cousin would go too and would stop for Yang Hsun every morning and they would go and return hand in hand! Might she not go?" The pleading was not to be resisted, and the next morning saw the two girls hand in hand making their way with decorous demeanor, slow steps and downcast eyes, through the narrow muddy streets to the mission school.

The room was very small where the day-school started. Some eight or ten very clumsy-looking desks, no two alike, but picked up at second-hand stores throughout the city, had been rented for the year, and these were placed against the side walls of the room at intervals, while the teacher's desk stood in the middle of the room. About a two-foot-square piece of wall had been painted black, and here the new characters for each day's lesson were written. It was to this school that Yang Hsun made her way that glad day and little did

she know how broad and splendid was to be the future road to knowledge for her feet.

And they were such little feet! They should have been larger than they were, but some three years before this, Yang Hsun's grandmother, in calling one day, had said to her daughter: "That child's feet ought to be bound. Don't you know you will never get a man to marry a girl with such feet as those? They look like salt junks now!" And poor little Yang Hsun will never forget the days of agony that followed when the cruel bandages were put on and each day drawn tighter and tighter. But, strange as it may seem, she had found an ally in her father. That broad-minded man of books, with his vision of the future planned when his daughter would be the scholar because he had had the wisdom to start her education, could not turn a deaf ear to her cries. How Yang Hsun remembered those first awful nights when she was put to bed after a day of agony, still with the bandages on the little feet, and how she would sob on her side of the big family bed that held the children, until—wonder of wonders!—one night never-to-be forgotten she heard a movement in the room and there was her father bending over her and gently loosening the bandages and whispering, "Now my Yang Hsun, go to sleep and don't tell. I'll come in early and put them on again!" And he was gone! And then she remembered how at daybreak, before his wife was stirring to get the

damp wood and brush to burn in the smoky old range, again Yang Hsun felt the dear gentle hands of her father quietly putting on the bandages and slipping away before detected in the act!

We remember the little freckle-faced girl that first day as she registered in the school. That she was the daughter of the first Christian and that she already knew how to read were the main facts concerning her. And then the missionary went her way and the school work was established and the Teacher Wang's child was started on her career.

Three years later the missionary had been unexpectedly called home on furlough. She was itinerating one day in America and was waiting for the hour when she was to make her plea for the work for women and girls over the sea in far-away China. In her handbag was a pile of letters just in from China and in one was the story of a new girl who had come to the boarding school—the Training School in Kiukiang. "She is a very bright girl," so the letter ran, "and you may have remembered her—Wang Yang Hsun of Tai Hu. Her father was the first Christian in that city and has recently died. He died with his children and wife about him, died talking to them of Christ and pleading with them never to worship the idols. His last words were a prayer for the little daughter who knelt by his side and who was his chief joy in life. Pastor Wang brought her here and asked us to take her in school. She has completed the work in the

day-school and if trained will make a teacher we hope. But she is very poor. Her older brother is now earning the rice for the family, and I write to ask you to help this girl by finding some one who will be interested in giving her an education." The letter was read with interest. Yes, the incident of the little Yang Hsun entering school was recalled—some one must be found to help the girl.

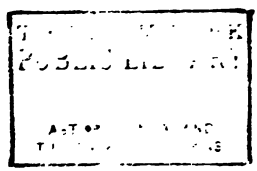
The meeting was almost over. The church had been filled with women whose faces told of sympathy for those for whom the missionary had made her plea. Sitting right in front of the platform was a woman whose eyes were never once turned from the story as it was told. Then she came quickly forward and whispered to the missionary as she was about to leave the room, "May I have a word with you?" And finding herself alone with the other said, "I want to help one of those Chinese girls! I want one for my very own—some one who really needs me—I've had sorrow of my own, and I want a girl I can love and think for and pray for. When you have such a case, write me—here is my card!" She would have gone but the missionary caught her by the hand and eagerly said, "I have her now for you—right here in my bag—listen and I'll tell you all about her!" And Yang Hsun's father's dying prayer had been answered.

The years that followed were wonderful ones for the young girl. Her American "Mother" as she called her, became the truest kind of a friend to the

half-orphan girl. Yang Hsun's desire to learn English was fired with ambition that she might read the dear letters that every month came from America, and the most devoted care was given to this subject, so that it was not long before she ventured on her own letters to the foster parent. She was the acknowledged head of her class in all subjects. She read with intense interest every article on the lives of American women and what they were doing. One day a visitor came from America—an official representative of the great organization, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. She talked in the Training School and so enthused the girls that when the rising vote was taken as to whether there should be a temperance society organized then and there, the whole school rose shouting and clapping. The missionary, whose hands were already full of busy life, asked that the school body consider carefully what it was doing and, said while she would give every support, it could not rest on her shoulders.

But one of the seniors shouted; "Let us organize! Yang Hsun will lead us!" And the flushed and happy-faced girl rose, her cheeks burning with the heat of the exciting moment in her life, and replied modestly yet eagerly, "Oh yes, I'll be president if you want me!" And the deed was done. A new spirit entered the life of the school. The work of the great leader of women of America, Frances Willard, was secured and as Yang Hsun's English

Frances when in the Training School



was much in advance of the other girls' she volunteered to read and translate the book and proceeded to do so, giving the results of her work at each of the meetings until the book and its contents had been devoured by the members of the Society.

It was graduation day for Yang Hsun. For the purpose of accommodating the many guests and friends of the Training School a great tile-covered auditorium had been erected in the school compound and the platform was gay with the floral decorations consisting largely of the white Easter lily and banks of ferns with the Chinese and American flags. It had been a great desire of Yang Hsun that she might deliver her oration in English but as she had chosen for her subject, "Our Country's Need of Temperance Reform" and wanted that she should have as large a hearing as possible, she decided that it should be in Mandarin that all might understand. With an abandon of herself such as we had never before seen Yang Hsun delivered not alone her oration but her very soul in her passionate appeal for her country. The use of the foreign-made intoxicant was just being introduced into China, by Japanese and United States Brewers, substituting this for the previous use of opium. The knowledge of the curse of strong drink in America and what it had meant, as told in the Life of Frances Willard, had stirred Yang Hsun and her class to tremendous feeling on the subject. It was not surprising, therefore, when Yang Hsun decided

upon a life-work, that she longed in some way to make it count for Social Reform for her loved country.

After graduation, she was assigned for work as a teacher of Science on the Training School Faculty, where for seven months she taught most successfully, proving herself a great asset to the whole school community. Then one day came a letter from America, from the National President of the W.C.T.U., asking if it were not possible for us to select from the many earnest young women of the school some one to go to America for training as a future representative of that organization in China. It was not difficult to make the choice—for so imbued with definite conviction of the needs of China for this great campaign work was the little girl now but eighteen years of age, but already an acknowledged leader in the temperance movement in the city and surrounding district, that the choice fell upon Yang Hsun. A hasty visit to the little home back in the interior and the glad consent was won from the widowed mother there, who saw in the opportunity the fulfilment of the cherished hope of the dear father, and then Yang Hsun was on her way to " Mei " Kua (" Beautiful Land ") where had lived and grown and served for all humanity the wonderful Frances Willard, whose life story had fired the little Chinese girl with like passions for the salvation of her own honourable country!

Three and a half beautiful, wonderful years fol-

lowed. In the lakeside town of Evanston, close to the great metropolis of the West, Yang Hsun entered, on English examination, the great University. Unspeakably marvelous were the unfoldings of the new world. Day after day brought more delights, but she tells the story herself that of all the precious things learned during those years—for she completed her course six months before her class—the best was the new vision that came to her of womanhood and her place in the world, as the days were spent during vacation often, always on the quiet Sunday evenings as she slipped away from the dormitory to peaceful, inspiring " Rest Cottage," where her loved patron and friend lived, the one whose own vision of Chinese leadership for the great Social Service to be done in China had brought Yang Hsun from over the seas. It was there in that home, with its precious associations of life of the world-renowned Frances Willard, where Yang Hsun could slip away from all others and hide herself in the large rambling room up under the gables, and sit at the desk where the woman of her ideals was wont to sit and wield the pen in the interests of great suffering humanity, that new enthusiasm was kindled, new aspirations were born, and definite plans made for her country. Once in the early days after her arrival in America, Yang Hsun was curled up in a great chair, lost to the world in the perusal of a story that had been placed in her hands,—the tale of a young prince, pampered, spoiled with the

luxury of life, who read one day the story of the sufferings of the working people of his own land and fired with sudden newly awakened passion, he sprang to his feet at the entrance of his father, the king, exclaiming; "Here grows a heart for my country!" Yang Hsun reached this part of the story just as her loved friend entered the room and tossing aside the book, leaped from her chair and standing with outstretched arms, face aglow with the glory of her own awakened soul, she cried out in the spirit of the book's hero, "Here grows a heart for China!"

Through the three and a half years that heart grew. It found a depth of understanding friendship in the "Mother," who through the years had loved the little child of her heart's adoption as she studied in the mission school, never thinking that same child should some day spend her long summer holidays by her side as a dear daughter, in the old family home in old New England.

She found ample opportunity for development of her oratorical ambition when attending the Summer conferences of the Chinese Students' Association. In the annual debate, the Chinese boys had always held forth. Why should not she—true, but a woman,—but why not enter the contest over here in this land of freedom and blessed womanhood, before venturing upon the platform in her own more conservative country? To wonder if it might be, was with Yang Hsun but the forerunner of definite

attempt. And Yang Hsun said to her friend of Rest Cottage, as she started for the Conference, "If I win the first prize, I shall send you a telegram. If it is only second prize—well, a special delivery letter will do to tell *that!*" The telegram was not sent and the letter told of the bitter disappointment because only the smaller silver cup was won. "But next year I shall try again and take first prize!"

And the Summer Conference of 1919 saw Yang Hsun triumphantly carry away the first prize—the "big silver cup"—the first Chinese woman to have entered the contest and to have won laurels from the men!

During the Senior year at the University, many stirring events in history tended to arouse the heart of the young crusader to action. There was the entering of China for exploit by the Japanese—the unjust action taken at Paris that sanctioned Japan's claims on Shantung. Yang Hsun's young soul was torn with grief and disappointment that such a verdict had been rendered. A trip to the east about this time made it possible for a stop-over at Washington. There were many sights to be seen, many places of interest to be visited, many wonders to be investigated by the ardent young enthusiast, but the one spot in all the city that drew her as with magnetic power was the Senate Chamber. Seated in the gallery with her loved, understanding friend beside her, Yang Hsun's slight girlish figure

grew tense as she looked and listened. It so happened that this day debate was on regarding Shantung. The small hands were clasped convulsively, the great dark eyes were fastened unswervingly upon the face of the speaker, the small mouth showed alternately amusement and grave disfavour. As the debate flowed on, often seemingly turning the tide against the great newly awakened "Baby Republic" over the seas, the small Chinese girl at last turned with passion burning in her face, to exclaim, "Oh, they do not understand my country!" Her friend replied, "I expect you would like to tell them, wouldn't you?" With absolute selflessness, and thinking only of that land for whose chance for the best in life she lived, Yang Hsun replied eagerly, "Yes, if I could only have the chance!"

Her "own" had not been forgotten during these years of preparation. In Chinatown of the great Western city, the slight figure of the young girl was a familiar sight on Sundays. There she gathered about her a group of the women of her own race, the wives of the merchants in business in that city —women whose lives were empty of interest outside the narrow confines of their homes—strangers and aliens in this great land of ours, and with no broadening influences because no one remembered them. Here Yang Hsun organized a social union where lectures were given, evening entertainments planned, meetings for mothers, clubs for girls, and off Sundays she taught a large Sunday school.

The invasion of the American Brewers' Association in China and organized effort for the carrying on of this trade, brought from the pen of the youthful opponent of social evil such a protest as aroused the Chinese student body in America, several thousand strong, and resulted in the splendid society known as "The Prohibition League of Chinese Students in America." Yang Hsun was elected the English Secretary, and this organization has for its aim the carrying on of a propaganda that will flood China with splendid literature enlightening the nation as to the evils of the liquor traffic and forcing the government to provide such laws as will eliminate the brewer whether he be foreigner or Chinese, from doing business in the Chinese Republic. The Chinese student being the greatest power today in that land, the world may expect large things from this new organization.

In a great theatre building in the city of St. Louis in the fall of 1919, an immense gathering of representative women from every state in the Union had assembled. On the platform were seated the members of the Executive Board of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union. The gracious President was introducing the next speaker and turning slightly to her left she stretched out a hand and said most feelingly, "Come, my child!" Then, turning to the vast audience, she said, "I have great pleasure in presenting our own Frances Willard Wang, the newly appointed Secretary of

our society to China." For a moment there was silence then the assembly of women rose to greet a Chinese girl. In clear ringing words the message was given. Appreciation for the happy years spent under the protectorate of the women there gathered, then—"True happiness will never come to a nation until the men and women are looked upon as equal. Until this question is settled there will always be a struggle for equality. I am going to fight for equality for my long-oppressed sisters at home. This does not apply to suffrage alone, but it embraces educational and industrial equality as well. I want the world to know that the so-called round-faced, dark-eyed, dark-haired and small-footed women of China can *do* something when once they are free! I am going home, too, to tell my people the danger of alcoholism. The liquor traffic is looked upon as being absolutely anti-human in the eyes of all Chinese. The spread of this wild-fire must be stopped in order to maintain China's happiness and perpetuate the race. There are great tasks awaiting every Chinese young man and woman. How far I shall succeed I do not know, but will you help me with you constant prayer? Finally, I bid you farewell. I thank you for all your kind hospitality extended to me during my stay in this noble country, the United States of America. (She held aloft the flag of the Chinese Republic in one hand and the Stars and Stripes in the other.) I love the five colours of our Rainbow, and I also

Frances Willard Wang, under appointment to China

love the Stars and Stripes with the red, white and blue. May the women of China and the women of this country base their friendship upon noble ambition, mutual understanding and help. May the Republic of the United States and the Republic of China base friendship upon good will, justice and truth!"

The years seemed to roll back for one brief moment. A train of thought recalled the honeymoon on the wheelbarrow, the one lone Christian found in the distant walled city of old China—the plan for a girls' school—a tiny hut home with the one-time devotee of Confucius, now a Christian, teaching a wee wisp of a girl to read—the first child to register in the new school—a father's hand laid on the dark head of his child as she kneels weeping beside the couch—a lonely American woman's vision of her part in China's salvation—a young life with its chance that God intends all alike to have—a great waiting nation of two hundred million women and children! And our hearts softly whispered, "What hath God wrought!"

VIII

CHUAN-ER; OR, "LEADING A SON"

CHANG LAO PON was putting up the shutters to the little shop for the night. It was raining and the task was not an easy one for the great boards that fitted into each other, forming the entire front of the house, were heavy with the dampness they had absorbed during the day, and were not at all inclined to slip into place as they were wont to do. Pulling and tugging was accompanied with many a grunt and an occasional "Ai yo!" from the man himself, the last long rough piece of timber was in place, and Lao Pon slipped into the house, closing the small opening with one shove to the part that held the lock.

Within the tiny room, preparations were going on for the evening meal. Bending over the Chinese brick range, stood Mrs. Chang, her long-handled iron spoon giving a frequent stir to the rice that was now at the browning stage in the oven pan that held it, then quickly turning to the other huge *wo* she dexterously used her chopsticks to turn the tiny fish frying in the mustard oil—sending out most appetizing odours for the hungry man who had just entered the room.

There were no other occupants of the home. The house itself was very tiny—the front room was a long and very narrow one—scarcely eight feet in width, but extending back nearly twice that length, a rude partition made of mud bricks separating the whole into two rooms. The front room served as shop, kitchen, guest-room and general "living-room!" A counter was ranged around the front of the place, on one side of the room, and behind this, on the dingy shelves, were to be found the various articles for sale—spices in boxes, dried fish, salted and dried ducks stretched out as far as their anatomy would permit and as flat as the counter itself. Boxes of foreign matches in tiny boxes were distinguished from the other objects on the shelf by the bit of red paper that showed itself in clear outline. The yellowish brown paper money, always in demand for sickness and death, was stacked high in another part of the blackened shelves, and long bunches of incense ready for use were in evidence. A glass jar held some very pathetic-looking dried olives, and most conspicuously exhibited were the rolls of white vermicelli, newly arrived from the factory where it was made and tied into tiny bundles, one bundle being sufficient for a meal for a family.

It had not been a very good day for sales, and Chang Lao Pon looked worn with the burden of life as he threw himself into the straight-backed chair that stood close to the square table, now partly

ready for the evening meal. But it was not the fact that trade had been dull that brought a cloud upon the face of the head of the little household. A heavier cloud rested over the home. Chang Lao Pon and his wife had been married for some years now. The country home of the ancestors had been deserted by the young man and his girl bride after the wedding festivities were over, for he had determined that he would go "to the street" to live, that is, to the nearby city and open a shop, hoping the day would come when he would be a great merchant, for the farm life had failed to lure him.

The years had passed, one after another—true, in peace and quiet harmony for the couple but there had ever been a lack of gladness in the humble home —for their hearts had grown tired and the years weighed upon them heavily from hopes unfulfilled, dreams unrealized. To the waiting man and his wife no little child had come to satisfy their hearts and make glad the dark, dingy home with laughter and fun, and to the oft-repeated inquiries as to the prospect of a descendant to worship at the graves of the parents in years to come, the answer had been sent back many times by the frequent messenger sent in from the homestead in the country, "The gods have forgotten us!"

Chang Lao Pon and his wife had not forgotten the gods, however! Never had the little porcelain lamp that held the pith wick, nor the jar where stood the incense sticks been empty! Through all

the years, though often in the cold days of winter, the little table had scarcely held enough rice to preserve soul and body for the two, yet the cash was always found for the lighting of the lamp and the filling of the room with the sweet scent of the incense. Then, too, many trips had been made to the temple each week, there to offer prayer such as must have moved the stony heart of the stony gods had they not been too intent on other things to give attention to the eager young man and his wife.

But hope deferred this time was truly making the heart sick. With a gesture of impatience, such as his wife had rarely seen through the years, Chang Lao Pon pushed back the partly emptied bowl of rice, laid the chopsticks by its side, rose from the table, stood hesitatingly for a moment, then drawing a long, dingy muslin bag from the depths of something resembling a pocket, he turned the contents on the table—a table on which were the remnants of the fish back-bones, fins, and head, with particles of the dried rice scattered in indifference and untidiness on the bare surface.

"Eh, are you going out tonight? It's raining and you have coughed much today," ventured Mrs. Chang anxiously.

"Yes, I'm going out. That it rains is not important. I had a message today from the priests to call there—they have a suggestion to make." A spasm of fear passed over the features of the

wife. Had the awful hour come in her life—that which she so long had feared? It had come to many another woman who like herself had failed in her filial duty to bring into the home the longed-for-son. Oh, how she had prayed to the gods, how she had agonized over this her sin—and now, could it be that *her* Lao Pon was intending to do what his relatives had so long urged upon him as his duty, the putting away of the "unfilial wife" and taking another in her place? What did this conference, this interview with the priests tonight portend? Well, she would go, too, whether to the temple or wherever it might be—he would not refuse her this.

Quickly the few dishes were washed and put away in their place, the ashes of the wood or brush fire in the range covered, and Chang Lao Pon started out into the night, followed by his wife. Through the narrow, slippery streets the couple made their way, the man with the red oiled-paper lantern in hand, carefully picking his way through the oozing mud, while behind him at a respectful distance plodded the woman, her small feet encased in a pair of heavy rain shoes, while her hands were drawn far up into her sleeves, to keep them from the cold night wind. Through one street after another, they made their way—here and there passing a lonely pedestrian, or coming upon some night peddler with his shop consisting of the stove of charcoals and steaming hot stew, with bowls

and chopsticks—very essential to a good meal, securely strapped to his back, one hand steadying it, while the other rang his bell, his voice accompanying the latter and assuring all who heard that "supper was now served"—at your very door!

After a walk of some thirty minutes the entrance of the temple came in sight, and the two entered. After the usual formalities were exchanged and tea had been brought by the grey-garbed priests, the pipes were brought out, filled, lighted, and the weighty subject upon the hearts of Chang Lao Pon and his wife were broached.

Yes, the priest knew the eager desire for the longed-for-son. Everything to entice the spirit of the boy that surely must be somewhere, had been done—all but one thing! It had occurred to the priest that if Chang would make every provision for the son who still refused to enter the home to bring happiness to his parents, possibly the little one would be induced to enter his abode. Had the man and his wife sought to bring a little daughter-in-law into the home, there to await the son's coming? Could they not purchase such a daughter, and so prepare future happiness for the son?

Chang Lao Pon and his wife looked at each other. No, they had not made this effort—but they would, oh, so gladly, if it was all that was keeping the joy from their humble home. And after further talk and most excellent advice from the priest and the necessary coins had been dropped into

the coffers of the temple, the two night visitors went their way, courteously bowed out of the gate by the sacred dwellers of the court.

Late into the night did Chang and his wife converse on the new undertaking now awaiting their attention. The following day inquiry was made of many of the daily customers for the wanted baby girl. Some days passed and then from one of the country buyers came the knowledge of a girl born into a very humble home far away in the foothills of the Li Mountains—several girls already had come to this family and the poor parents undoubtedly would be glad to find a home for the child. Being a girl there would be but little to pay, possibly a few small gifts to the family would be sufficient.

Early the next morning the neighbours were surprised to see Chang Lao Pon lock the door of the shop very carefully after him and, followed by his wife, hurry off towards the South Gate that led outside the city towards the distant hills. And late that evening the two returned, the woman holding a tiny bundle of what appeared to be coarse blue cotton cloth. The last preparation for the enticing of the spirit of their longed-for son had been made. Surely the dreaded fate would not now be hers! In her arms she carried the beautiful little week-old baby girl and in her good Lao Pon's pocket was the paper that had been drawn up in proper form and that day signed by the contracting parties, betrothing the little mite in the blue cotton

bundle to the "unborn son of Chang Lao Pon"! And the baby had been named Chuan-er, meaning "Leading a son," for was it not the high hopes of the eager couple that she should by her sweetness and attractiveness lead the spirit of the wilful son to his parents' hearth and home?

How life was changed in the little shop on the street. A baby's laughter and a baby's tears, and a baby's demands for attention, for love, for rocking in the little cradle, for carrying in the arms of the great man after the day's work was ended, for the tiny garments that the mother-in-law must make by the faint light of the pith wick,—all brought a mighty transformation to the two dingy rooms! And the impatient look passed from the face of the man and the lines of anxiety and fear from that of his wife. Little Chuan-er grew as must all real babies, and she filled the hearts of her adopted parents full to the brim with gladness. Surely never was a little girl more dearly loved or more tenderly cared for! "We must make her happy," said Chang Lao Pon, "For our son will not want an ugly, unattractive, unhappy wife!" From the meagre earnings of the man, cash was always in readiness for the buying of a bit of bright-coloured silk that his wife might embroider the baby a new pair of red shoes! And the baby girl fully repaid all the love showered upon her by her winsome ways and the affection which she gave the good man and his wife.

And the years rolled on, while they waited for Chuan-er to lead the son's still absent spirit to his home! One day, after years had passed and the little daughter in the home was nine years old—Oh, joy unspeakable! the gods heard the prayers of the faithful, and a son was born in the tiny little shop close to the city street!

What years they were that followed—well was the happiness worth waiting for! Chuan-er's joy was complete with the dear baby "brother" to help care for, and never was the child too tired to rock the clumsy old cradle while her mother crooned and sewed and mended, or washed the bundle of clothes that was her daily lot! And the baby grew into a stalwart child! He was but a few weeks old when the betrothal feast was celebrated—a mystery in its meaning to the little girl, who was dressed that day in a pair of beautiful bright red trousers from the bottom of which showed the brilliantly embroidered silk shoes covering the poor crippled feet that some two years before had been so firmly bound, so that the son when he came might find the child-wife with the delightful "lily feet" and not to be put to shame by a large-footed wife!

And the roly-poly baby crowed that day as he was handed about from guest to guest and duly admired, unconscious of the destiny that was that day being mapped out for his future years. So with the years that followed all very quickly, the baby accepted the life of the home and called the

dear child who tended him and served his every want, his "Chie Chie" ("Big Sister") and rejoiced in her devotion to his small self!

As young Chang became of the age for serious life and its accompaniments, he was sent to the nearby government school for boys. Here he made good progress in his Chinese Classics and the family watched every step of advance with pride. Then in the most unexpected moment, an unlooked-for calamity swept over the tiny household. Chang Lao Pon, with only a few hours' illness, passed out of life, leaving the stunned wife with the two young people to care for—and without the wherewithal to do the caring. After the funeral and the distant relatives had departed to the country home again, the grave question of how to live faced the trio. Young Chang said; "I can go to work, Mother! I can sell things on the street!" He was nine years old—the same age of "Chie Chie" when he himself had been born. But both mother and sister would not hear of such a thing. The father's dream for the boy must be realized—he must be educated and have the life of a gentleman. Mrs. Chang bravely said: "I will open the shop and go behind the counter and see what I can make in this way. Your father's regular customers will patronize us."

So the venture was made, and the little widow rose before daylight to do her housework and be ready to open the shop as soon as there was stir of life in the streets. But a few weeks sufficed to prove

the impractibility of this plan. Advantage was taken of the lone woman, and the income was so slight from her sales that there was not rice enough to feed the three. Winter was coming on and fuel and food and clothing were needed. Something must be done. Chuan-er at last went to her mother with the proposition that she be allowed to try working in a nearby factory that had been opened by an energetic young business man. Many girls and women had flocked to the doors to work—women in this new development of the Western world entering the East! At first there were vigorous words of protestation to the proposition, but Chaun-er pleaded: "You know, Mother, you have cared for me all these years. I have now grown strong and I am no longer a child. You are getting old, father is not here, little brother is too young to work, and he is to be a great man some day. Let me go out into the world and see what I can do to care for you!" And she at last gained the consent of her mother for the undertaking. A few days only did the beautiful young woman, so far shielded from contact with the world as she had been, stay in the factory. Then one night she sobbed out the story of the rudeness of many of those who spoke with her, and the mother said as she smoothed the glossy black braids of the girl's dark hair: "You shall never go back there! Ai ya! What would the Lao Pon say if he knew!"

Again the family faced want and dire need.

Then to the ears of the young girl came another proposition. One of the neighbouring women with whom the family often held innocent gossip, called to Chuan-er to come over to her side of the narrow street—she had something good to tell her—she had a "Fah tz" (a plan) at last! Eagerly she told of the woman who, washing clothes at the lake edge that day, close to the bearer of the news, had said that over near the South Gate of the city, where the foreigners had a big school, there was a position for a young woman to serve as amah—to help care for several young children for a Chinese woman teacher. This was a perfectly safe place for any young girl! Just what the work consisted of, the friend did not know, but it was worth looking into. These foreigners—well, they were after all harmless and they did a lot of "hao si" (charity) and the day for fearing their evil influence was now gone by—wouldn't Chuan-er like to go and ask about it?

No sooner said than done and the end of it was that the girl found herself engaged by the month with her own board secured and $3 to the good, for the work of caring for two young children while their mothers were teaching in the schoolroom. Chuan-er returned radiantly happy and the glad news was eagerly told to the mother. But Mrs. Chang was not so happy over the plan. Must Chuan-er be away all the time? How could she live without this dear girl whose sunny way and loving helpfulness had become such a necessity to

the life of the lonely woman! But after much thought it was decided that Chuan-er must try it—and her few simple garments were carefully washed and folded and tied in the clean bit of cloth to be carried to the new place.

Thus did Chuan-er's new life begin in the mission compound. She was intensely interested in everything that surrounded her. The first day she was told to take the young children when the bell rang to the schoolroom and seat herself by the door with the other employees, to listen to the "chapel service." Now what this meant Chuan-er had not the slightest idea, but she went at the ringing of the bell, and despite the lively capers of the two children, Chuan-er managed to catch a great deal of what was being said. There was a young foreign woman on a raised place on the floor who signalled the students assembled to rise, and they all sang keeping time to music that came out of a square box in front of which a Chinese woman sat. Then this same foreigner talked—it was rather difficult to make out all she said, for her Chinese was broken and often she said things backward, but then there was a wonderful Man she talked about—He performed great miracles when He lived, but He died and went away in clouds to Heaven. But this much Chuan-er managed to understand—that this same Man, whose name was Jesus, was a Friend of everybody in all the world! Chuan-er's thoughts here wandered and she determined she would ask

her friend for whom she was working to tell her more.

Accordingly, that night after the two lively children had been put to bed, Chuan-er, sewing in hand, went up to the young teacher and asked her many questions that had occupied her own thought all that day. The teacher very patiently explained many things about the Jesus doctrine to the girl. Again the next morning Chuan-er heard more and again at night plied the teacher with questions and finally asked very timidly if she thought the foreign Siao Chie would mind if, after her day's work was done, she took her sewing just inside the door of the schoolroom and "listened" to the studying of the pupils. The teachers were busy in the evening explaining many things in the books. Chuan-er would so like to be there to hear it all!

The missionary was very glad to grant the request of the teacher, and for Chuan-er a new life opened. Night after night, with her hands full of sewing, her ears were taking in many things they were hearing. One night, the teacher was surprised to find Chuan-er with a piece of broken slate and the tiniest scrap of a pencil, most laboriously making the Chinese characters as she had seen them on the blackboard, and to her questioning she found the girl could correctly give the meaning of each one.

That next day, the teacher went to the missionary and said: "Do you know, Siao Chie, we have a very bright girl in this one who is caring for the

children. She is already learning by herself to write characters, and she tells me each night all that you have taught in the Bible lesson of the morning. It wouldn't do any harm to let her sit at the back of the schoolroom at a desk and try to study a little at night, would it? I can help with the sewing myself—I would be glad to have her give this time to learning a little—so few girls in China can read!" So it was agreed that Chuan-er might begin her lessons at night. Again some two weeks later, the teacher with eager face went to the Principal and said, "That girl Chuan-er is going ahead of many of the girls who are studying all day long. She is a dear girl—and has so wonderfully responded to the Gospel. I have been thinking it all over. We have so few young women as yet preparing for Christian work, and this girl is very bright and young, and if we give her a chance she will develop into a worker. The other teacher and I have thought it over. We want Chuan-er to enter school for training, if you are willing. We have very little money ourselves, but we are willing to pay her the wages just the same, for that is all the mother and little brother have to live on at home, and she must have that. She will help us in the morning and nights and we will look after the children ourselves and let her study. Will you give her a scholarship?"

The plea was not to be resisted. And their argument was a strong one! The Training School was

in its earliest days and the little old building held but fifteen or twenty young women then as students. Here was just the type of young woman wanted—raw material for cultivation for the Master's vineyard. Yes, we would take Chuan-er and see what the school could do for her.

But God did it after all! With all the energy of her being, Chuan-er commenced her work as a student. Her bright young face, flushed with the joy of it all, was bent day after day over her books. No smile was more winsome, no eyes more alert to take in what was going on about her, and truly no heart more responsive to the message of the schoolroom.

Into the young soul came a great awakening and response to the spiritual teachings with which she was surrounded. Into the heart of the girl came the One who brings new life to the dead soul, and Chuan-er bade Him welcome—she had found her Lord and Saviour. The day came when she was to receive baptism, and the night before while talking to the missionary she asked for a Christian name—the one given her by her foster parents with its heathen meaning must be discarded, and so her teacher suggested the name of "Esther," having in mind the beautiful story of the young captive girl witnessing and leading her people in the midst of their bondage. Might the missionary not hope that in the years to come the young woman so strangely brought to the school would prove a leader to the Christ, active in His service, rather than serve as an

agent for the gods? And that beautiful Easter morning, standing among the many other converts, with the chancel rail filled with the glorious white lilies and the joyousness of the atmosphere filling the old mission church, Esther bowed her head as the hand of the old Chinese pastor was laid upon it in consecration.

Busy, happy years followed. Esther was one of a class of fifteen young women, striving for the best that the Training School could give to her. In her Junior Year she was chosen as President of the class and had well earned the love and devotion of her classmates. That year a wonderful emancipation came to her. For some time she had realized, as life with its realities dawned upon her, and knowledge of the world had come, that it was going to be an impossible thing for her to wed the lad who was her "little brother" and that for both of them must come a new relationship and understanding of the future. One day, alone with the dear mother who now leaned on the "daughter" more than ever before, Esther talked out the whole problem. "Brother" was doing well in school but he knew nothing beyond what "Big Sister" in her short visits at home on Saturdays could tell him of the Christian religion and Esther wanted him to go to the mission school for boys and there have the chance that many boys were so eager for to obtain Western education. Esther herself, in her few years at school, had far outrun the boy with his years at

Esther's Class at the Training School

the temple school. A talk with the missionaries had opened the way for the boy to enter, and at last the mother consented, for she too had found in the teachings of the Bible and in the services that she attended at the Training School on Sundays a peace that her tired heart had never found before.

So young Lao Pon entered the mission school. Not many months passed before he too accepted the Christ as his own Friend and was later on baptized. In touch with the Christian teachers and their families, young Chang commenced to have ambitions of his own for the future. Questionings as to the possibility of the vow or betrothal of his parents to the "Sister" so many years his senior came to him, so that when at last in the home circle one day Esther tactfully broached the subject a most amicable agreement that the engagment be annulled was reached. A suitable wife, however, must be provided for the young man. In a nearby hut lived a girl in her teens, bright attractive,—already an attachment had sprung up between the young people. A very business-like call from Esther and her mother upon the parents of the girl settled the weighty question. Chin Chih was to be sent to the Training School the following year at Esther's own expense, for Esther would then be teaching and the girl given every opportunity for preparing herself for the life of a Christian worker, for had not young Chang already pledged himself in the Volunteer Band for service for his country and church? Then if later

on the young people were to choose each other, according to the new laws of the Republic, all would be well.

Esther was radiantly happy. She came to her missionary friend and with her great dark eyes aglow with joy told of how the betrothal had been most harmoniously broken and asked that the little girl who was to be her substitute might enter school the next semester. And Esther herself? "Oh," she said with eager voice, as she smilingly clasped the hand of her friend, "I am free to give my life wherever God needs me! I will always be my mother's daughter and care for her. She is happy, and—father would be also if he were here and had known the 'good news' and all the enlightenment it has brought to us."

A few months later Commencement day dawned. At first it quite looked as though it might not "dawn" for the rain that commenced the day before never ceased, but rather fell in gospel measure just as the exercises were to begin. A large tent had been erected on the compound, for the schoolroom would not accommodate the many guests. Here, with her class, our Esther had her day of triumph! As we looked upon her fair young face so radiantly happy, her slim, graceful form clad in the simple white linen gown, a spotless white camelia in the glossy black hair, she stepped forward to give her oration, facing with quiet composure that great audience of two thousand people, turning

and bowing to the two Bishops of the church, the other missionary representatives, the Governor of the province and his military staff and the many other guests of honour of the occasion. Then as she lifted her voice and with clear ringing tones delivered the message to her people, our mind turned back to the day some twenty years before when a disappointed man and his trembling wife came back from the country with the tiny bundle of a not-wanted baby girl, wrapped in blue cotton cloth, in their arms!

God does care! In His mighty plan for this old world He who notes the falling sparrow has a plan too for the smallest, unnoticed baby girl in great dark China! And He never wastes materials! He uses you and your scholarship, the Chinese teacher and the mission school to bring about His purpose for the life.

In a great city hospital today in one of China's harbour cities Chang Lao Pon's only son is to be found dressed in one of the pure white linen suits, passing in and out the great wards of the institution, giving beautiful service in the Red Cross Work to the suffering men of his country as they are carried there. On his occasional visits to the old home city far up the Yangtse River a call is always made at the Training School where "Sister" is now a member of the Faculty and where as teacher of mathematics she is helping in the training of hundreds of other young women. Sunday finds Esther in one

of the mission chapels in the heart of the city where she conducts the large Sunday school and afterwards preaches to the crowds of heart-hungry men and women passing the door, often with the heavy burdens upon their shoulders, but finding a welcome and a place to sit and rest a while, as the young woman on the little platform yonder in pleading tones tells the old story of Love—the Love of the One who led her own feet into the pathway of Peace.

IX

REBECCA'S GRADUATION

LI SHEO was growing old—there was no question about it. The familiar figure of the old gardener who for over twenty years had cared for the lawns and the gardens of the hospital compound, supplying the marvellous variety of plants for the bordered walk leading from the arched gate to the entrance of the building, filling the vases and jars with glorious beauties cut fresh every day for the dispensary and chapel, private rooms and public wards, working incessantly in rain and sunshine, heat and the cold of the rainy season, that the gardens might be ever beautiful, and winning the hearty praise of the "Little Doctor," was really showing the advance of years. And Li Sheo himself knew it! He realized it that warm day in the early fall as he stood leaning on the old lawn-mower, wiping from his wrinkled face the beads of perspiration that stood on it from the exertion of the last long run across the grass.

Over the way the sound of gay laughter of young girls and women was clearly heard. School was just reopening for the fall semester at the Training School. All day long the street had been

filled with the coolies arriving from the river front carrying the big red trunks of students returning from the interior. Wheelbarrows blocked the entrance as they squeaked their way over the rough stones and then deposited their burdens of lively girls who as soon as alighted would shout the name of some familiar chum seen among the earlier arrivals and peeking through the great gate on the lookout for a friend. A thought worth thinking had come into the mind of the old gardener. He had a daughter at home—just about the age of these happy young creatures and if *she* might have the same chance that these girls were having why maybe, as he grew old and the mere pittance that he now earned to keep the old woman and himself supplied with a bowl of rice twice a day was not forthcoming, there would be the girl to care for them! Of course, it took money to send a girl to school in these days. Li Sheo could remember when the Girls' Boarding-School was first opened that any girl brave enough to risk the danger of having her eyes dug out to be used for medicine by the foreign missionary doctor might go to school. Of course, old Li Sheo knew there was no truth in the dreadful stories the Chinese people told, but he recalled those days just the same. He leaned still more on the handle of the machine and thought. He would venture—it was a bold thing for him to do, yet it was worth trying.

From across the street came the missionary. Her

arms were piled high with note-books, account books, and in one hand a big handkerchief tied up at the four corners, filled with the cash and dollars and paper money representing the tuition fees of the students enrolling that day. Li Sheo felt his chance had come, and as the missionary passed along the walk, giving a tired smile to the old man, he stepped forward with the courteous remark, "Siao Chie, may I speak to you?"

Stopping in her walk and leaning against a great, tall palm, one of the many that formed the shady path leading to the home, the missionary assented, saying, "Well, Uncle Li, what can I do for you?" Then the story came out. The bent figure bent a little more in the awkwardness of embarrassment and the rough, horny hand that had seen a lifetime of toil was rubbed nervously across the smiling mouth, as the plea commenced. "Siao Chie, I am very bold to come to you, but I have been thinking all day long of something. All day long I've seen the students arriving at the school over the way. Theirs is a great blessing—not many young women of my country have it. *I* have a daughter at home —just one left to us now, for you remember the fourth girl was laid away last year with the lung fever. But we have one more—she is young, only sixteen years old, and she is well and strong. Of course she is stupid as all girls are, but I don't think any more so than the average. I think perhaps she might be able to learn something if she had a

chance. Anyway, she would learn of the Jesus doctrine. I am the only one in the village that knows of it, and I am here all the time and I can't read, so I have no way of teaching others. I *wish* my girl could come to the school! I would be glad to pay what I could for her. You know my wages are $2 a month and my rice. I would be glad to pay half of that for my girl—*if* you could just let her have this great blessing!"

The missionary thought. The school was crowded already to overflowing and some of the little rooms of the Chinese house intended for class-rooms had that afternoon been converted into dormitories. But—here was a chance for influencing one more life for God! Could she take the responsibility of refusing, not knowing God's plan for this life? "Well, Li Sheo," she answered as she moved on slowly, "suppose you send for your girl and let me see her. I'd like her to come in from the country and talk with me before I answer." And the old man pressed both hands together and bowed low with his mumbled words of thanks.

The next day Li Sheo's daughter arrived. The missionary was called out to the gate to see her and there stood a tall, slender, young woman, dressed in a pair of very gaudy calico trousers and a blue cotton *qua-tz*. Her large dark eyes were lifted shyly to the face of the foreign teacher, who with a few words of pleasantry brought a most charming smile revealing dimples in the rosy cheeks. One

glance into the face of the eager girl settled the question. Oh, the missionary did so covet these bright young women for the Training School, and the question was soon settled—the girl was to return to the country home for her clothes and come as soon as possible.

Not many weeks had gone by in the school before every teacher recognized in the new student a girl of unusual ability. She was not long in finding delight in the pages of the Chinese readers, and as to the life of the school, she soon filled a part in it all her own. The years passed on. Li Sheo's daughter had become a true follower of Jesus Christ. When she was baptized in the church one bright Easter Sunday, the Christian name of Rebecca was given her in place of the Chinese name with its heathen significance. The missionary had given her that new name because it seemed to those who had learned to so love her,—this bright, vivacious young woman, with the ever laughing face, the sweet voice, the tall graceful figure,—that the name of the beautiful Jewish maiden of long ago was just about right!

With the new life and aspirations that sprang into being from the spiritual growth, Rebecca became in every way a leader in the school community. She easily led her class—all rivals had given up the race and acknowledged the smiling victor. Rebecca had been chosen as class president. In everything that she touched she excelled. When

she had pleaded for a chance to learn music, she soon proved herself here also. In the school chorus it was Rebecca's sweet, clear voice that rang out in leadership, and when the girls went out for a few days itinerating with the missionary, going from village to village to tell the story of Love to the people who had never heard, it was Rebecca who was always among the first to volunteer to "preach." The missionary eagerly waited for graduation, knowing that here was one who could be relied on as a real leader among the people.

And one day, without the slightest warning, the blow fell. A walk in the warm days of spring brought the girls back to the school compound in a happy but tired state, and in a few hours a hurried messenger called for the Doctor to come quickly,—Rebecca Li had had a hemorrhage! The days and weeks that followed almost broke our hearts. Could it be that Rebecca, the brightest and best, the one we were so bound up in, for whose future we had laid such plans of usefulness, could it be that our Rebecca should not finish her school work? Why, senior year had come! Only a few more months and the long years of training would be ended and the places waiting for this young worker were too many to mention. She would be such a perfect "fit" in any one of them, that it was still undecided as to where we should place her. China needed her so! Surely God knew this—in

Rebecca

His own great dark world of Christlessness—and we would ask Him to spare her! We prayed and worked too! Everything known to medical science to stay the oncoming disease was done. We sent the brave, patient girl to the mountains among those who would care for her, and where so many others had found health and strength. But it was not long before we all realized the awful truth—Rebecca was going from us. We could not save her.

One day a pleading letter came from the girl, written from the mountain home, asking if she might not come back to Kiukiang and stay in the hospital. To be near the loved Dr. Stone, was the cry of the heart—"for it is so lonely here." And knowing the time was growing short, we granted the request and sent a "chair" for the invalid. We prepared one of the sunniest rooms, knowing it was the last thing we could do for her. Pictures were hung upon the white wall, flowers were placed on the table, books were laid there to attract, and when all was ready our dear girl came. But, oh, the sad change of the past few weeks! The large, wonderful eyes looked out from a face marked with suffering and the once rosy cheeks now bore the hectic flush. But she smiled—the same dear smile, and how glad she was to see us! We carried her up to her little room. She looked around with such appreciation, and we left her to rest. The following day as we were returning after a full program of work at the Train-

ing School, a white-gowned nurse called us and said that Rebecca wanted to see us for a minute.

As we entered the sunny room, true to Chinese courtesy which is never forgotten, the sick girl rose from the chair and drawing us to another near her, seated us, then sat close by, with such a sad expression in her face, we wondered what was happening. Had the home-coming proved a greater trial than she had expected? All day long she must have heard the peals of laughter coming at recess hours from the familiar school across the street. Memories must have flocked to the girl, thoughts of what might have been for her and now were to be denied her forever, must have filled the active brain. There was a pause, then Rebecca smiled and said, "Siao Chie, this is such a beautiful room that you and the Doctor have prepared for me. These pictures are so pretty—these flowers—I hear that you put them here, and then every one is so good to me. But, Siao Chie," and the girl drew her chair close to ours and reaching forward took our hands impulsively in her own burning ones as she said, "*Please* don't think I am not happy here. Don't think I do not appreciate it all. I *do*, but I cannot stay here! I want to go to my home in the country!" Amazed and yet thinking possibly it was a longing for the poor old mother, we said, "Rebecca, shall we send for your mother to come and see you?" The dark head was shaken

emphatically and then again the story went on, "No, Siao Chie—it isn't that, but oh, I cannot be happy here! We need not hesitate to talk of it any longer—you know and I know that my time is very short. I have studied so many years and waited so long to get ready to work for the Lord. I had hoped to spend a long life in service for my people, but now, O Siao Chie, when you hand the diplomas to the girls next June I shall not be there. I shall never go out to work for God. I am so soon going to meet Him. I shall soon see Jesus. He has done so much for me," and a look of despair swept over the young face as she again reached for our hand and pressing it convulsively said, *"I have nothing to take to Him in return for it all!* Let me go to old village! No one there has ever known Jesus. I still have a little strength. *Let me go and tell my people as long as I can, of Him!"*

What could we do? Rebecca had had a bigger vision than the missionary! All the comforts of the hospital, the nurses to tenderly minister, the good food carefully prepared, the loving "Little Doctor" to watch over, the missionary-mother to try and comfort, were nothing compared with this last chance to win somebody to her Lord! And though it almost broke our hearts, the next morning we made her as comfortable as we could in the sedan-chair, and saw her carried away, still smiling, on the shoulders of the coolies—back to the

miserable little mud hut of a "home" in the midst of the village of heathen darkness.

The weeks passed by. We were busy in the rush of the work of the schoolroom. Letters came from time to time from the sick girl in the country, but we were not cognizant of the fact that *her* time was passing so quickly, until one morning Li Sheo stopped us in the compound as we were hurrying to work, with the words, "Siao Chie, I've just heard that Rebecca is going fast. She wants to see you. Would it be asking too much for you to go out to our place? I'm unworthy, but—" And we felt condemned that we had waited until called, but said, "Li Sheo, please have a chair ready at daylight tomorrow and you go too, to show the way."

When the sun was just sending out the faint tinging light in the east, our chairs started. Through the rice-field country following the little footpaths over the hills and down through the valleys, our road led, after we had left the city with its bustling humanity. Hour after hour we went, the sun rising higher with the passing time, making the day intolerably hot. About noon we entered the village—a wayside one, with some great famous camphor trees giving a cooling shade among the tiny mud huts of which the town was composed. Our chair stopped under one of these, and the sight of the "foreigner" brought the people old and young, men and women, from houses and

fields, for it was the first sight of its kind in that place. The mother of Rebecca came running to meet us and to assist us from the chair. With many bows and an attempt at prostration of herself on the ground, which act we quickly prevented, the tired-faced little woman escorted us to the "home." It was a little three-roomed hut, the guest-room in the centre of the place, and one little bedroom off from each side. We were led towards one of these rooms. As we entered, we pushed one foot in front of us slowly and cautiously that we might not fall over anything or into any of the ruts in the earthen floor, for the room was at first entrance totally dark. In this blackness, lying on a rude Chinese bed, lay our beautiful Rebecca! Her feeble voice, so weak and yet with its same sweetness of tone, led us to the place.

How glad she was to see us! We talked with her of herself for a few minutes, then quickly dismissing that subject she said, "Siao Chie, I want to ask you so many things, but we shall have only a little while together. You will return tonight?" We told her we must do so, and she said, "Then there is one thing I want more than anything else. I do so want to hear you talk of Him once more. I want the people here to hear you, also. Will you hold a little preaching service in the other room? Mother will call the people and I can hear you. *I do so want to hear you just once more!*" So we consented, and in less time than it takes to tell it

the place was crowded with the villagers. We left Rebecca and went out to the other room, and such a sea of faces as we looked into! Old men and women, young farmers with their tools in their hands, dirty, uncared-for children, their bodies covered with boils and heads with disease that in many instances had eaten away the hair, leaving the head bald, women, just young in years but old in sorrow and burden-bearing, carrying naked babies in their arms; others showing signs of recent labour in the fields. And we thought: "This is Rebecca's clan. This is the people her heart yearns over—what message can we give?" We explained in a few words the object of our coming, then said that if the people would listen we would sing one of the hymns of the Jesus religion, and turning to the tiny hymnal we had always in our pocket, we commenced, as we supposed it would be, a solo:

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,
Like the wideness of the sea!
There's a kindness in His justice,
Which is more than liberty!"

But to our utter amazement the crowd was singing! No, it wasn't exactly what you would call "singing," but they were making a noise, attempting to make it sound like ours, and they knew the words and were singing with faces full of eager delight! We stopped short after the chorus, and said, "*Why,* you can sing! Where did you learn it?"

A dozen voices answered, "Li Pei Chia taught us!" ("Li Pei Chia" means "Rebecca)". And how they sang it! Then we sang "Jesus loves even me!" and several other familiar hymns. Oh, yes, we *did* sing them, and the very angels above witnessed to it! There seemed but one text, and we preached for a few minutes from the old loved one—the best-loved one to the multitudes this tired world over, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son!" And as we talked, they grew closer to us,—those tired-faced men and women, and the children were "hushed" by the mothers, that their prattle might not interrupt, and the old men nodded and said, "Ah, it's good to hear!" Just in front of the missionary stood a little bit of an old woman. The hair was all gone from the head, the teeth from the mouth, faded little eyes set way back in her head squinted and their owner came closer and closer until her face was almost in ours. She evidently was scarcely able to see, but the worn face lighted up at every word of the love of Jesus, and no good Methodist "brother" of the Amen corner days in the old church in the homeland, ever responded more lustily than did this old saint as she continually reiterated, "Shih chen-tih!" ("It's true!")

The talk was ended. But we wanted results—oh, how can the heart be satisfied with less after talking to such an audience of needy ones! And the missionary paused and said: "We want to ask

a question! You have been listening to this story of the Heavenly Father's love as Rebecca has told it to you. Is there any one here who has really come to love this God? Any of you who have stopped worshipping idols, and now love and pray to the loving Jesus?" There was not an instance's pause, before hands went up—the old saint's in front, some of the farmers, many of the women, and little children boys and girls said: "O ngi Yie Seo!" ("I love Jesus!") The missionary was almost overcome! Could it be true? Yes, all over that village were those who had been led to know the true God during the weeks of weakness and suffering of the dying girl.

The service was over. The short prayer concluded, and we hurried to the dark, black room again and kneeling beside the bed we took the hand of the girl in ours and said, "Oh, Rebecca, it is so wonderful what God has helped you to do!"

She smiled and said, "Do you think Jesus will be pleased?" And we answered, "Yes, dear, so pleased! You need not be ashamed to meet Him now. He will give you a more precious diploma than Knowles School would have put in your hand!" And we thought as we turned away that day, riding back to the great city, of the multitudes of young women, with all that education could bestow, with the talents too many to mention that God had given to them, with Christian heritage, with the strong healthy physique, one of His best

gifts to His children, who might well envy this dying Chinese girl, with her rich gifts for the King!

The next day we sent a covered bed with bearers, and a nurse from the hospital to care for the patient by the way, and Rebecca was brought back to the spot where she first learned to know her Lord. There for several days she lingered, her face eagerly turned to ours, always wearing a smile so like the first one that Fall day when she won our hearts. And then, one afternoon, just as the sun was dropping behind the palm trees and relief was coming to suffering humanity from the heat of the day, our beautiful Rebecca, waiting to go and meet Him whom she so loved, held our hand a little tighter and smiled again a little more brightly as she whispered, "O kui yü tao liao!" ("My happy day has come!") It was the expression of the schoolgirls when they at last reached their day of triumph, and—our Rebecca had graduated!

X

WAITING!

THE long day was almost over! We had been travelling by wheelbarrow over the hill country of the Province of Anhuei for four days, and now as the twilight came on we found ourselves just at the top of the last hill of the range of mountains we had been crossing, and beyond us stretched the great open plain of country that must be traversed before we should enter the city of Tai Hu, our objective point. It was the first time we had gone over this road for only recently had the young pastor and his wife been sent out to this city for the establishing of a mission there. He had urged us to go and look over the land, hold some meetings and make plans for the development, generally, of that newly-opened field.

It had been a rainy day, a typical one for the missionary to itinerate. In the section of the country where her efforts were better known it had become quite a joke among the people, when there had been a long siege of rain, that "the missionary must be coming—it rains so!" And this particular day, from early morning when the start had been made from the last station and the coolies had been urged

to undertake the trip much against their own inclination until this evening hour the rain had fallen unceasingly. On the wheelbarrow side by side sat the missionary and her Chinese companion. At intervals the wind had made it impossible to hold the umbrella, and anyway there isn't much fun in balancing oneself on the Chinese auto going at the rate of thirty miles in twelve hours through the slippery mud of the roads where "skidding" is a most easy feat and where such an accomplishment invariably meant a plunge into the water-filled rice fields that border the footpaths used for traffic!

Our Chinese wadded garments were heavy with the rain and our spirits were somewhat drooping, for even the missionary is human, you know! The trip had been made with no opportunity for preparing food *en route* and the bowl of tea and native cakes had sufficed to appease hunger—but now, with the coming of night, and the intense cold that swept over us from the open plains, we felt our fast must be broken and our clothes dried before undertaking the three-hours' trip that still awaited us before reaching Tai Hu.

As our wheelbarrow squeaked along through the narrow, already dark street of the little village we were entering, we eagerly sought for some open door of a shop. All were closed for the night against the danger of approach of stray evil spirits that might be abroad and looking for an open door to enter and remain for the night, thus disturbing

the peace of the family. Here and there, some rather tardy house-owner was putting up the last shutter to the little home, and cautiously turned to peer into the faces of the strangers passing along. We were in despair as we rolled through the street on our machine, when suddenly we spied a tiny light flickering through the still open door of a hut.

"Kui si! Kui si!" we called to the weary wheelbarrow man, groaning with fatigue. "Be quick!" we called again, and then, to expedite matters, we both jumped off the seats and hand in hand hurried towards this one last hope, before the door might be shut. As we approached the tiny place—just a one-roomed mud hut, an old woman appeared in the doorway, and shading her eyes for a moment watched our coming with an expression of fear and curiosity. As we drew close to the front of the place, suddenly to our utter amazement the old woman took a step towards us, and as we started to speak, she stretched out the two long, thin arms, and dragged us quickly inside the door. We wanted to explain, but not waiting to listen to us, she eagerly poured out words of heartiest welcome.

"Come in! come in, out of the night. Oh, but you are very wet and your feet must be cold to death! Please take a seat—" pushing us towards two tiny wooden stools, then hurrying to a corner of the dark room, she brought a little mud-made jar in which were a few half-dying charcoal embers, and with a great effort she blew these into a little

Itinerating in the country

red blaze, the smoke and coal dust amounting to more than the fire, then placed this jar under our water-soaked feet. Once only did we try to talk and to thank our unknown friend for her wonderful cordiality, but she interrupted and continued to talk herself with all the familiarity of an acquaintance.

"The foreigner is hungry; here is a cup of tea," pouring from a very black pot, a bowlful of very black tea, which however was steaming hot and we eagerly drank it—the best cup of tea we ever drank! It was so warming and so strong and it did taste so good as we sat shivering in our wet clothes on that hard little bench! Meantime, our companion had started to explain a little that we were greatly indebted for this blessed welcome, but again was interrupted as the little old woman went on, "Drink more tea while I warm up the rice. Here is a little left from the evening meal. I had just eaten. I have only some very despicable vegetables to give you; but it is all there is, and the shops are now closed. Too bad there is no egg for you." And the feeble old body hustled from one end of the little hut to the other, stirred up a fire in the mud range with the damp twigs and brush that she brought in from the rain outside, filling the place with a dense, choking smoke, but never did smoke seem quite so heating as it did that night! And we drank our black tea and waited, and wondered! There was no dread of the

foreigner here! All day long as we passed through villages where the white-faced woman had not been seen before, curious crowds had gathered, but few people had drawn near us, and little children hid behind their mothers' loose gowns, evidently in much fear.

At last the meal was ready and our stools were brought up to the Chinese square table, which was wiped clean of the dust and remains from the prepared food, and the two big bowls of steaming hot rice were placed before us. The coarse chopsticks were carefully washed in boiling water so we did not venture to use our own which we carried with us, lest we offend. Another dish with some dried, salted turnip that had been fried in mustard oil, was placed in the middle of the table. We bowed our heads and returned thanks to the Heavenly Father for this care of His own, then eagerly devoured the food placed before us. It was after we had eaten the last kernel of rice and finished the last piece of hard, indigestible turnip, that we drew our stool close to that of our hostess and taking her rough hand in ours asked, "Popo (old God-Mother) what made you do all this for us—we are strangers to you?" With a smile of childlike trust and confidence lighting up the faded old face the little old woman leaned towards us, smoothed our hand in her own, and said: "Well, you see I knew you as soon as I saw you coming! Nine years ago, another woman with

white face and hands like yours, came through here. She had big feet like a man, the same as you have, and eyes with no colouring matter in them, just as you have. We had never seen such a person before and at first we were afraid, but she stayed here all day nearly. She told us such a wonderful story of a Man who she said was the true God. She told about His love for all of us. She told how worshipping Him brought happiness in the life. I never knew happiness! I am a childless widow, and oh, there are so many of our people here who are without happiness in their lives! We were so glad to hear this story and we begged the foreign woman to stay and tell us more. But she said she had to go on to many places—that she was the only one for all this part of the country. But she promised she would *send some one to teach us,* and *we've waited nine years!* As soon as I saw you, I knew she had sent you and now—you will stay and teach us more of the true God. I'm so glad you have come at last!" The face was radiant with joy, and in her eagerness and delight, the old woman rose and patted us on the shoulder. It was the nearest to a caress that a Chinese would presume to give!

What could we say? How could we tell her that we too,—like Gertrude Howe, the pioneer of our mission, who was as we learned afterwards the one who had passed through here before,—must go on, now we were alone on that district, and after all the years, still this ground was untouched.

Somehow, we stammered out the explanation, our heart almost breaking as the cloud of disappointment passed over that pleading face! We told her more of the Saviour's love, we gave her all the truth in simple form that we could press into the few minutes left to us. The coolie pushed his face in at the door and urged us to hurry or we could not get to Tai Hu before the city gates were locked, and after the attempt to remunerate our old friend for her supply of rice and fuel had been most emphatically repulsed, and our dried garments were even buttoned on us by the eager old hands, we too, like the missionary of nine years before, came away promising once again that we would "send sometime" to this village some one to tell the old Story of Love.

Waiting! Oh, you never waited for anything in your lives as that old woman has waited for the Bread of Life! And all over great China today are thousands of such villages and towns and large cities, where they are still "waiting"! How much longer shall it be? Is it your fault?

"They have waited—oh, so long,
For a little bit of love!"

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CHARLES ERNEST SCOTT, M.A., D.D.

Missionary of the Presbyterian Church, Tsingtau, China

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